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Spring 1975

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ANNALS OF WYOMING

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KATHERINE HALVERSON
Editor

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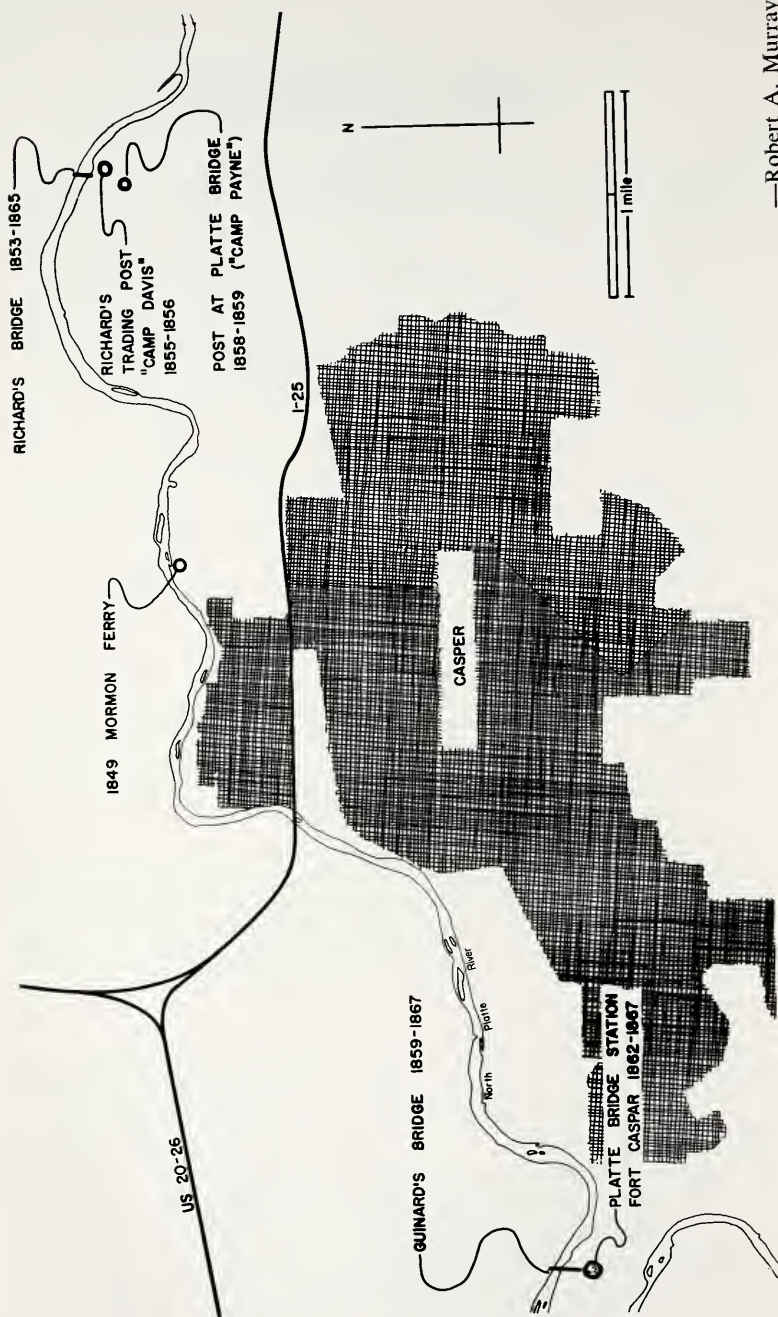
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—Robert A. Murray

Trading Posts, Forts and Bridges of the Casper Area—Unraveling the Tangle on the Upper Platte

By

ROBERT A. MURRAY

AUTHOR'S NOTE

This paper is an effort to bring into more general public knowledge the results of research done by the writer in 1971 in the course of projects for the Wyoming Recreation Commission, The Parks Department of the City of Casper, and the Casper Chamber of Commerce. It is but one example of the kind of by-product that can result from effective correlation of the interests and resources of state and local governments and individuals on historical projects.

Particular thanks are due to several persons. Mr. Thomas Nicholas of Casper is one of the region's most serious and skilled research historians. He, more than anyone else, kept alive the local knowledge of the relationship of the earlier military posts and Richard's Bridge, in the face of the kind of controversy that sometimes develops among local historians. He, along with the late Dick Eklund, Bill Morgan, Robert Carpenter, Grover Phelan and Charles "Chuck" Morrison and others of Casper, led the archaeological work in 1963 which confirmed the locations of Richard's Bridge and its related structures. Mr. O. W. "Bill" Judge of Fort Caspar Park and Museum spent appreciable amounts of time discussing the Guinard Bridge and its associated sites with us over a period of several years. The members of the Fort Caspar Commission, the staff of the Wyoming Recreation Commission and others were very helpful. The Western History Collections of The University of Wyoming as well as the Historical Research Division of the Wyoming State Archives and Historical Department were most helpful. And far from least, John D. "Jack" McDermott shared with us the contents of his fine file on the Richard family.

Written history of the Casper, Wyoming, vicinity begins with the account of Robert Stuart and his party of returning Astorians in

1812.¹ Stuart and his men pioneered the easy-gradient Platte Valley, Sweetwater, South Pass route through the Rockies which contributed so largely to the settlement and development of the Pacific coast as a part of the United States. Fur traders used the route as a major means of access to the central Rockies for over 30 years after Stuart's time. Thus well known, the trails along the Platte quickly became the main channel for emigration to California and Oregon as well as to intermediate points in the years after 1841. From 1841 to 1862, the old trails along the Platte near Casper were in a very real way the "main street of the continent."

During the peak years of that emigrant traffic and through a period of Indian warfare that followed, the locale achieved a tactical importance in both commercial and military activity of the region. Despite this real importance, the attention given to this locale by historians has been fragmentary, and all too much focused on a handful of particularly dramatic and emotion-charged events. It is perhaps time to pull these historical loose ends together into a coherent framework of history for the region. Much new research data has come to light within the past two decades that is useful for this purpose.

THE RIVER CROSSING PROBLEM

Emigrant trails into Wyoming generally paralleled the North Platte River on both its north and south bank. A few groups would change sides at some point east of Deer Creek, but this was optional, and depended upon their evaluation of trail conditions. In order to turn off up the Sweetwater valley, it was essential, however, to attain the north (left) bank of the river no further upstream than Bessemer Bend, for not far above that point Jackson Canyon offers an obstacle then impassable to wagons.

Parties coming along the south bank could cross in dry weather in the late summer and autumn at many points along the river. In the days before the development of major irrigation facilities involving management of the Platte River flow, the river's level was much more sharply seasonal than it is at present. Spring and early summer saw a prolonged season of high water that coincided for various reasons with the arrival of the largest numbers of emigrant caravans on the upper Platte. In such high water, a river crossing by wagons was risky at its best. The risk was sufficient to offer some opportunity for commercial ferrying of the river, and ferrying operations form the beginning of seasonal commercial activity in the area.

1. Spaulding, Kenneth, *On the Oregon Trail, Robert Stuart's Journey of Discovery*, (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1953).

Historian Dale Morgan presented the detailed story of ferrying of the North Platte at this area in an earlier issue of *Annals of Wyoming*.² There is no need to duplicate his effort here, but outlining it and supplementing it with other data will help to put later developments into context.

Brigham Young left nine men in this vicinity to establish ferry service in the summer of 1847. At first they used a sole-leather skiff they called "The Revenue Cutter," to ferry the contents of wagons across the stream. They moved at least once during that first season, and after several experiments built rafts on which to float wagons across the river.³ Each season a new party of men came out from the Mormon settlements to put their ferry back in operations. In some years they evidently buried the boats for protection through the winter.⁴

In 1849 these Mormon ferrymen built a substantial stockade at their ferry point. They also evidently engaged in blacksmithing to add to the income of their venture. At this time they used decks of planking floated on dugout canoes as ferry boats.⁵ Captain Howard Stansbury of the Corps of Topographical Engineers visited this stockaded Mormon ferry of 1849. Careful analysis of his journals and maps make it evident that their structure and ferry operated from the south bank of the river in an area that is probably within the present North Casper Park.⁶

In 1850 they used a conventional cable-drawn ferry of plank flatboats, such as were common on the eastern rivers.⁷

All told, the Mormon ferrymen occupied perhaps half a dozen locations, including the major fortified position, in the six seasons from 1847 through 1852 that they worked here.⁸

The demand for ferrying service generated competition. Most of the emigrants came from regions where the rivers were much more formidable obstacles to travel than the North Platte, and ferrying was a widespread craft in the old frontier region from which they came. Stansbury crossed the river at Deer Creek on a privately owned ferry in 1849.⁹ Several travelers of 1850 mentioned a "Missouri Ferry" somewhere near the Mormon Ferry.¹⁰

2. Morgan, Dale L. "The Mormon Ferry on the North Platte", *Annals of Wyoming*, July-October 1949, pp. 111-167.

3. *Ibid.*

4. *Ibid.*

5. *Ibid.*

6. Stansbury, Howard. *An Expedition to the Valley of the Great Salt Lake*, reprint from the 1852 London edition, (Ann Arbor, Michigan: University Microfilms, 1966), pp. 59-60; Stansbury maps, copies in the Western Interpretive Services collections, originals in the National Archives.

7. Morgan, *op. cit.*

8. *Ibid.*

9. Stansbury, *op. cit.*

10. Morgan, *op. cit.*

(In 1851 John Richard and some of his business associates built a bridge over the North Platte about a mile west of Deer Creek, that was washed out by the high water of 1852.¹¹)

(The next year they moved to a site near present Evansville, and built a new and much more substantial bridge. For a variety of reasons, this bridge and the related commercial and military establishments here have remained elusive and at times controversial. Most writers until Dale Morgan's time either confused them completely with the later Louis Guinard bridge (1859-1867) located six miles upstream, or else tended to ignore the early importance and long-continued service of the Richard Bridge.)

(The bridge was built by John Baptiste Richard (senior), long an important figure in the Upper Platte trade with Indians and emigrants. Built in time to serve the peak of emigrant trade in 1853, the bridge remained in service until early in 1866, when troops from Fort Caspar, six miles to the west, tore it down for the salvage materials it contained.¹²)

The earliest first hand account of the Richard Bridge after completion that we have encountered to date is that of Count Leonetto Cipriani, who crossed it on July 26, 1853:

Alone, except for some help from the Indians, they had been able to erect a bridge of twelve arches, entirely of cedar, with piers formed of huge tree trunks and filled with gravel.¹³

Three days after Cipriani's visit, Thomas Flint reports:

Passed a bridge across the Platte—strong one built of hewn timbers. Reported to have cost \$14,000.¹⁴

The best description of the bridge to date has been found in a deposition by Joseph Knight in the Indian Claims Commission files in the National Archives:

A permanent bridge structure about 835 feet long; 18 feet wide; built over and across the North Platte River. The floor of which was about ten feet above the high water mark, made of timber three inches thick and 18 feet long, sawn by hand with a whip saw. The heavy timbers were hewn and hauled from 6 to 10 miles from the mountains. The timbers were braced, stayed and bolted with substantial iron bolts, and in a workmanlike manner. The bridge was built on 23 piers or cribs of hewn timbers filled with stone hauled at least five miles for the purpose.

11. *Ibid.*

12. Letter, Joseph Bissonnette at Fort Laramie to Thomas Pim, St. Louis, January 28, 1853, copy in John D. McDermott Collection.

13. Falbo, Ernest, (ed.). *California and Overland Diaries of Count Leonetto Cipriani, for 1853 through 1871*, (Portland: Champoege Press, 1962), p. 89.

14. Flint, Thomas. *Diary . . .*, (Los Angeles, np, 1923).

Knight valued the bridge at \$35,000.¹⁵

Knight is known to have worked at the bridge for Richard. He may have helped with the construction work, and definitely helped to repair the bridge, and at one point managed it for some months for the owners.¹⁶

There are but few other detailed physical descriptions of the bridge itself, most emigrant accounts being simply interested in getting across the river. On June 12, 1859, J. A. Wilkinson wrote:

It is built of cottonwood timber with hewed poles for a floor, and as the river is deep and swift, it must have cost some money.¹⁷

The surveyors' field books at the Fort Kearney, South Pass and Honey Lake Wagon Road expedition provide very precise locational data for the Richard Bridge. These data agree exactly with the location of archaeological remains of the bridge that were found in 1963.¹⁸

Near the south end of Richard's Bridge a considerable trading post grew up. Many travelers mention the store here. Sir Richard Burton called it "the indispensable store-the *tete de pont*," where he and his fellow passengers "drank our whiskey with ice, which after so long a disuse, felt unenjoyably cold."¹⁹

Other accounts mention "a trading establishment near the bridge, and also a coal mine . . ."²⁰ and "several log houses or huts there, one blacksmith shop, one grocery, and drygoods store . . ."²¹

Richard and his employees operated these facilities through the spring of 1865.²²

Like all the other trading establishments Richard had helped to

15. Knight, Joseph, deposition, September 22, 1892, file 8526-123, Indian Claims Files, National Archives.

16. Knight, Joseph, deposition, December 1, 1898, file 8081-123, Indian Claims Files, National Archives.

17. Wilkinson, J. A. "Journal," original in Newberry Library, Chicago, pp. 72-73.

18. "Fort Kearny, South Pass and Honey Lake Wagon Road, Rough Field Notes, 1857; Compass and Odometer Readings," "Compass Book Kept by J. F. Mullooney from Fort Laramie to the Forks of Rocky Ridge," both of the above from "Records relating to Wagon Roads, RG48, Records of the Secretary of Interior, National Archives; copies of archeological field notes, sketches and photos in the Thomas Nicholas Collection, Casper.

19. Burton, Sir Richard, Fawn M. Brodie, ed., *The City of the Saints and Across the Rocky Mountains to California*, (New York: Knopf, 1963), p. 156.

20. Phelps, Captain John W. "Diary of Captain Phelps," in LeRoy R. Hafen, ed., *Documentary Account of the Utah Expedition*, (Glendale: Arthur H. Clark Co., 1958).

21. Cowden, James S. "Diary," entry for July 11, 1853; original in a private collection, copies of portions in McDermott collection.

22. Richard, Louis, deposition, May 30, 1887, file 7868-123, Indian Claims Commission files, National Archives.

found and operate, this one was evidently colorful enough at the height of the trading and travel seasons. In the first season of operation, traveler William K. Sloan says:

There were quite a number of mountaineers located about the place and all very thirsty from some of the men they ascertained that we had a five gallon keg of whiskey aboard the train, they must have it, price was no object. Stewart finally agreed to let them have it, in consideration of our crossing the bridge free, which was equivalent to \$125 for the whiskey; . . .

I heard afterwards the whole party got on a glorious spree.²³

The camp here, with its diverse commercial enterprises, its more numerous and varied hangers-on, must have resembled an enlargement of the John Richard post found seven years earlier by Francis Parkman at a point seven miles below Fort Laramie:

. . . pushing through a noisy, drunken crowd, I entered an apartment of logs and mud, the largest in the fort: it was full of men of various races and complexions, all more or less drunk.

Here were maudlin squaws stretched on piles of buffalo-robcs; squalid Mexicans, armed with bows and arrows; Indians sedately drunk, long-haired Canadians and trappers, and American backwoods-men in brown homespun, the well-beloved pistol and bowie-knife displayed openly at their sides . . .²⁴

The community at Richard's Bridge did not mellow much with age, as in 1859, it was a place where the Captain William F. Reynolds surveying and mapping expedition

got uproariously drunk, and Reynolds, himself a teetotaler, lost control of them. Lieutenant Smith and the escort mutinied, leaving the Captain and what were left of his command to move into winter quarters at an abandoned Mormon village near the Upper Platte Indian Agency.²⁵

(Note: this wintering point for Reynolds was at Deer Creek, somewhere near where the present Interstate highway crosses the creek.)²⁶

Behind all of this turbulence, however, Richard represented a sound business man of the best frontier sort. His venture of the bridge had the backing of Joseph Bissonette and others, all substantial traders of the region.²⁷ For all the varied character of the

23. Sloan, William K. "Autobiography of William K. Sloan," *Annals of Wyoming*, July, 1926, pp. 245-246.

24. Parkman, Francis. *The Oregon Trail*, (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1900), p. 155.

25. Goetzmann, William H. *Army Exploration in the American West, 1803-1863*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1960), pp. 419-420.

26. Hill, Burton S. *On the Platte and North*, (Buffalo, Wyoming:, 1969).

27. Letter, Bissonette to Pim, *op. cit.*; there is a wealth of material on these business relationships in the Indian Claims Commission files, National Archives, only small portions of which are cited in this paper.

passing emigration, only a few emigrants were critical of Richard or had in their own estimation unfair treatment from him. He did put the competitive ferry operations out of business by buying them out or intimidating them,²⁸ but J. Soule Bowman said in 1853:

"emigrants can cross their stock in safety and at a fair price."²⁹

Richard charged from \$2.50 to \$6.00 per wagon for bridge toll. Most emigrants did not consider these tolls exorbitant, particularly when they gave thought to the alternative of floating wagons across the North Platte at high water. He usually charged from four to ten cents per head for livestock to cross the bridge, which one might view as cheap flood insurance, indeed! During the drier seasons, many parties forded the river at points upstream, and a few set up their own ferries for the purpose.³⁰

Richard not only accepted whiskey and other valuables in exchange for tolls, but odds and ends of household goods that by this point in the journey might be only an encumbrance and yet of some use at the settlement. One emigrant notes that Richard accepted "mother's baby wagon" for their bridge toll.³¹ He also traded rested and well-fed draft stock for trail-worn stock. Blacksmiths at his shop, using coal from the nearby mine, provided a much needed repair service, available at only a few other points.³²

Richard and his partners employed a full-time accountant at the post, from its first opening.³³ They brought skilled carpenters out from St. Louis from time to time for repairs.³⁴ Substantial profits here enabled Richard to finance such other eminent traders as Ward and Guerrier at Fort Laramie.³⁵ From this source also came the money that built a store in Denver, and ranches at other

28. Coutant, C. G. *The History of Wyoming*, Vol. I., (Laramie, Wyoming: Chaplin, Spafford and Mathison, Printers, 1899), pp. 365-367; Judson, Phoebe, *A Pioneer's Search*, (Bellingham, Washington: np, 1925), p. 41.

29. Bowman, J. Soule, item in the *Daily Missouri Republican*, 1853, cited in Albert Watkins, ed., *Nebraska State Historical Society Publications*, Vol. II, 1922.

30. Sutton, Sarah. *Diary*, entry for June 11, 1854; original in a private collection, copy in McDermott Collection; Sloan, *op. cit.*

31. Carpenter, Helen. *Overland Journey*, entry for July 5, 1856, Newberry Library, np, nd, p. 39.

32. Sloan, *op. cit.*

33. See letter, Bissonnette to Pim, *op. cit.*

34. Jackson, W. Turrentine, *Wagon Roads West*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1952), p. 207.

35. Promissory note, May 20, 1853, Ward & Guerrier to Bordeau, Richard & Co., in the Seth Ward Papers, John Hunton Collection, Wyoming State Archives and Historical Department.

points.³⁶ Richard appears in now-available documents as much more than just the rough frontiersman who opened the trade in "Taos Lightning" in the 1840s on the North Platte. Good attorneys in Denver and in Washington, D.C. handled his business operations, and his partners and employees were noted in the St. Louis and Kansas City newspapers when they came to town on business.³⁷

At this point we should step back to the early years at Richard's Bridge and take up the story of the locality against the background of the two bridges and their operators.

The earliest document we find pertinent to the Richard Bridge is a letter from Joseph Bissonette at Fort Laramie to Thomas Pim in St. Louis, written on January 28, 1853, asking Pim to come to keep books for the new company that was building the bridge.³⁸ Beginning with the Cipriani account and the Flint account cited earlier, there are numerous emigrant journal entries mentioning the bridge.³⁹

In 1854 Richard contracted with Joseph Knight to make repairs to the bridge and to tend it, collecting his repair bill out of the tolls.⁴⁰ John Richard, with other associates then went over to Green River for the winter, trading for Indian ponies.⁴¹ In the spring of 1855 they returned to the Bridge, where one of the men, Joseph Merivale, says:

We burned off the old grass to let the new grass grow; one night five Crow Indians came in and told us that they saw a party of Blackfeet; that night the ponies were all stolen; I followed them the next morning with two Oglalas, Torn Belly and Black Hills, who are now living at Pine Ridge Agency, on the best of a few tired-out mounts that the

36. Wharton, J. E. "History of the City of Denver . . ." with Wilhelm, D. O., *Business Directory of the City*, (Denver: Byers and Dailey, 1866).

37. See Account E537, Bk 68, with enclosures, Letters Received in the Office of the Quartermaster General, National Archives; *Missouri Republican*, September 1, 1858; *Kansas City Journal of Commerce*, August 26, 1858.

38. Letter, Bissonette to Pim, *op. cit.*

39. Others not cited elsewhere are: Orange Gaylord, "Diary of Orange Gaylord . . . A Second Trip to Oregon in 1853 . . .," *Transactions of the 45th Annual Reunion of the Oregon Pioneer Association* (Portland, July 19, 1917), Portland, 1920; Ables, T. J., *Trip Across the Plains*, entry for July 8, 1857, Newberry Library; DeWitt, Ward G., and Florence S. *Prairie Schooner Lady: The Journal of Harriet Sherill Ward, 1853*, (Los Angeles: Westernlore Press, 1959), p. 87; Horton, Emily M. *Our Family*, np, nd, 1922, Newberry Library, pp. 27-28; Ackley, Richard Thomas, "Across the Plains in 1858," *Utah Historical Quarterly*, July/October, 1941, pp. 203-204.

40. Knight, Joseph, *op. cit.*

41. *Ibid.*; Richard, John Sr., Deposition, March 2, 1868, file 8081-123, Indian Claims Files, National Archives.

Indians had left; we followed them about 25 miles to the north but did not overtake them . . .⁴²

Along with the Northern Indians, the tribes that frequented the Platte Valley became more frequently involved in incidents along the trail in 1853 and 1854. Farther downstream, friction between the many traders at their small posts along the trails steadily increased. Some incidents were quarrels within families, some arose out of jealousy between the young men and the traders who were wealthy beyond Indian dreams, occasional incidents involved emigrants and soldiers.⁴³

In 1853 a small detachment of troops fought with Indians over possession of a ferry boat near Fort Laramie.⁴⁴ In 1854 an unfortunate series of events near Fort Laramie developed into the "Grattan Massacre" of August 19 of that year.⁴⁵ In November of 1854, Indians destroyed a contract mail carrier station at Ash Hollow.⁴⁶ Through the late fall of 1854 and the winter of 1855, tension increased through more incidents such as the theft of Richard's horses. The government planned a show of force on the plains that developed as the Harney Expedition.⁴⁷

After defeating and dispersing a large concentration of Brulés in the fight at Blue Water (sometimes mistakenly called the "Battle of Ash Hollow") in September of 1855, Harney intervened extensively in Indian and trader affairs in the Fort Laramie region.⁴⁸ He summarily ordered all the traders to concentrate at Fort Laramie, where they might be more effectively watched.⁴⁹ There was concern on the part of the traders for their abandoned stations, and on the part of the army for the security of the valuable bridge. Major William Hoffman, in command at Fort Laramie, wrote to Harney's Adjutant General on October 15, 1855:

42. Knight, Joseph, deposition, May 22, 1893, file 8081-123, Indian Claims Files, National Archives; Merivale, Joseph, deposition, November 2, 1886, file 8081-123, Indian Claims Files, National Archives.

43. Of a number of sources with much data on this period some of the most useful are: Nadeau, Remi, *Fort Laramie and the Sioux Indians*, (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice Hall Inc., 1967); Hyde, George E., *Red Cloud's Folk*, (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1956); Hyde, George E., *Spotted Tail's Folk*, (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1961); Hafen, LeRoy R., and Young, Francis M., *Fort Laramie and the Pageant of the West*, (Glendale: The Arthur H. Clark Co., 1940).

44. *Ibid.*

45. McCann, Lloyd. *The Grattan Massacre* (reprint from *Nebraska History Magazine*) (Fort Laramie, Wyoming: Fort Laramie Historical Association, 1966).

46. Sioux Expedition Letters, RG98, National Archives.

47. *Ibid.*

48. *Ibid.*

49. Letter, Major William Hoffman, C. O. Fort Laramie to Major T. S. Twiss, Indian Agent, January 16, 1856, Fort Laramie Letters Sent, RG98, National Archives.

(It would be a cause of much embarrassment to persons traveling on this route, and in times of high water would stop all trains and the mails, if this bridge over the Platte should be destroyed by the Indians, and I therefore propose, if it meet the approbation of the General, to station a guard of an officer and twenty-five men there during the winter to protect it."⁵⁰)

THE FIRST POST AT RICHARD'S BRIDGE

(Permission was soon forthcoming from Harney's headquarters, and Lt. James Deshler of the 10th Infantry was placed in command of a detachment for this purpose. He was instructed:

When you arrive at the Bridge you will keep your party at all times on the alert, exercise day and night the greatest vigilance. It will parade under arms for inspection every evening at Sunset. During the night the Sentinels will call the half hours.

Have no intercourse with the Sioux and as little with other Indians as possible.⁵¹

(Arriving at the bridge early in November, Deshler's men spent a very quiet winter. Richard and the other traders were not immediately allowed to resume their stations. In December, Hoffman offered to let Richard return to the bridge if he would refrain from engaging in the Indian trade. Richard refused and Hoffman then rescinded his authority to return. Finally in March of 1856, Harney authorized Richard to return to the bridge.⁵² With the return of the traders, things doubtless livened up a bit for the isolated troops.

(In their first return Lt. Deshler is shown in command, with a mixed garrison of twenty-two privates, one corporal, one sergeant drawn from the 4th Artillery, the 6th Infantry and the 10th Infantry.⁵³

The next return lists 2nd Lt. Robert C. Hill, 6th Infantry, in command, with a generally similar garrison.⁵⁴)

50. Letter, Hoffman to Winship, October 15, 1855, Sioux Expedition Letters Received, RG98, National Archives.

51. Letter, Hoffman to Lt. James Deshler, Fort Laramie, October 27, 1855, Fort Laramie Letters Sent, RG98, National Archives.

52. Letter, Hoffman to Captain A. Pleasanton, AAAG, Sioux Expedition, Fort Pierre, February 9, 1856, Fort Laramie Letters Sent, RG98, National Archives; letter, Ward and Guerrier, Fort Laramie to Hoffman, Fort Laramie, February 7th, 1856, Fort Laramie Letters Received, RG98, National Archives; letter, Thomas S. Twiss, Upper Platte Indian Agency to Hoffman, Fort Laramie, January 31, 1856, Fort Laramie Letters Received, RG98, National Archives; letter, Hoffman to Twiss, August 11, 1856, Fort Laramie Letters Sent, RG98, National Archives.

53. "Return of Detachment of U. S. Troops Stationed at Platte River Bridge, 125 Miles above Fort Laramie, Oregon Route," November, 1855, National Archives.

54. "Return of Fort Clay, Platte Bridge," January, 1856, National Archives.

With the return of the traders in March came an expansion of the garrison now under the command of Captain Henry Heth, 10th Infantry.⁵⁵ Heth was within a few years to become an army expert on marksmanship training.⁵⁶ He had two lieutenants, two sergeants, one corporal, one bugler and forty-six privates under his command. There were now civilian employees, Pat Sanders employed as a hunter, Nicholas Scott as an interpreter, Charles Hough as a teamster, and the well-known Nick Janis as interpreter.⁵⁷

Here, at what was then Camp Davis, occurred the first open conflict between the Cheyenne Indians and the U. S. government. Two historians have discussed the incident at some length. Dr. LeRoy Hafen says:

It having been reported that the Indians had four stray horses, the commander of the troops ordered that these animals be given up, but he gave assurance that the Indians would be paid for finding and herding the strays.

Though the Indians agreed to the terms, they brought in only three horses. Little Wolf, owner of the fourth, refused to give it up, insisting that this horse had not been found at the time and place described by the claimant. The commanding officer ordered the arrest of three of the Indians. While they were being put in irons, two made a break for freedom; one of these was shot down, the other escaped. The third, Wolf Fire, was held a prisoner, and ultimately was to die in the guardhouse. Following the arrest and break, Wolf Fire's relatives fled toward the Black Hills, leaving their Lodges behind. The troops confiscated the abandoned Indian property.⁵⁸

Dr. Donald J. Berthrong reports that this band of Cheyennes then killed an old trapper out in the Black Hills. Dull Knife came in to Fort Laramie on May 24, 1856, and tried to make peace over the affair.⁵⁹ At any rate it was one of a series of incidents that led ultimately to Sumner's extensive Cheyenne campaign the next year in Kansas.⁶⁰

From October of 1855 through January of 1856, the post was known as Fort Clay. From February of 1856 through June of

55. "Return of Camp Davis, North Platte Bridge," March, 1856, National Archives.

56. Heth wrote one of the first books on the subject to be used by the Army. (RM)

57. "Return of Camp Davis, North Platte Bridge," March, 1856, National Archives.

58. Hafen, LeRoy R. *Relations with the Plains Indians*, (Glendale: The Arthur H. Clark Co., 1959), pp. 169-170.

59. Berthrong, Donald J. *The Southern Cheyennes*, (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1963), p. 133; letter, Hoffman to Heth, May 24, 1856, Fort Laramie Letters Sent, RG 98, National Archives; Grinnell, George Bird, *The Fighting Cheyennes*, (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1955), pp. 111-112; letter, Hoffman to Pleasanton, June 18, 1856, Fort Laramie Letters Sent, RG98, National Archives.

60. Hafen, LeRoy R., *Relations with the Plains Indians*, has the best detail on this campaign.

1856 the post was called Camp Davis. In June of 1856 there were shifts of troops comprising the garrison and the new force was regarded as a sub-post of Fort Laramie.⁶¹

There is evidence in both army and Indian Bureau documents that the traders and the agent, Thomas Twiss, made efforts to have the post kept active in the fall of 1856, presumably to improve the trading volume and the opportunities for contract work. The army regarded the post as no longer necessary in view of the strength of the traders' own community there.⁶² Captain Charles S. Lovell, 6th Infantry, broke up the post and withdrew his men to Fort Laramie in November, 1856, thus ending the first military occupancy of the Richard Bridge complex.⁶³

No documents have come to light on the exact nature of structures at the early post, but we believe that the small garrison the first winter simply wintered in Richard's existing buildings, and that with the return of the traders in the spring, the troops went into tent camp for the summer. Correspondence relative the possible maintenance of the post in the fall of 1856 raises the point of the cost of building huts if a full company were to be wintered there, and shortly after this the troops withdrew.⁶⁴

The men at Richard's Bridge participated in the rescue of the Mormon party wintering at Devil's Gate in the winter of 1856-1857, and one of the survivors of the Mormon party says:

They had heard in some way that we were still alive. I think the Indians must have sent the word. They could not get buffalo meat, so had killed some cattle and were bringing them to us. They had been four days on the road, tramping snow and working through drifts, expecting to find us starving. I often think of those old pioneers, who were always so ready to help a fellow man in need.⁶⁵

The years 1857 to 1859 were particularly busy ones for John Richard and his partners. The conflict between federal and territorial officials in Utah on a number of points brought on the "Utah Expedition."⁶⁶ With this came a mixed involvement. In December of 1857 Richard was accused of hiding a number of rifles belonging to the fleeing Mormons leaving the country ahead of the

61. Returns, Camp at Platte Bridge, July through August 1856, RG98, National Archives.

62. There is an extensive exchange of correspondence between Hoffman and Twiss in the Fort Laramie Letters Sent and Received, and the Upper Platte Indian Agency letters for the period.

63. Final Post Return, Camp at Platte Bridge.

64. Letter, Hoffman to Twiss, August 9, 1856, Fort Laramie Letters Sent, RG98, National Archives.

65. Jones, Daniel W., *Forty Years Among the Indians*, (Los Angeles: Westernlore Press, 1960), pp. 79-80.

66. Hammond, Otis G., *The Utah Expedition, 1857-58*, (Concord, N. H.: New Hampshire Historical Society, 1928).

column. Thirty rifles were seized at his post at the bridge, and after considerable controversy were released to Richard.⁶⁷ The Utah Expedition greatly increased the volume of wagon freight traffic across the plains, and with it the importance of the bridge.⁶⁸ With the rise of the stream in 1858, this strategic importance led the army to station troops there for a second time.)

THE SECOND POST AT RICHARD'S BRIDGE

Operating under Special Orders #1, Headquarters Battalion of the 4th Artillery, Captain Joseph Roberts took Companies D and E of the regiment away from Fort Kearney on June 13, 1858.⁶⁹ The column arrived at the bridge on July 20.⁷⁰ They established what was called "Post at Platte Bridge", with a garrison of six officers, sixty-one enlisted men and thirty-five civilian employees.⁷¹

Captain Roberts remained in command of the post throughout its occupancy, and the garrison remained substantially the same.

The troops passed a very routine winter there. Historical accounts of the nature of the remains of the post a year and a half later, along with data on the winter camp practices of the Utah Expedition and archaeological finds at the site, indicate that the troops were housed in framed tents with board floors and stone chimneys.⁷²

Boredom and sanitation were as usual the primary garrison problems of the period. Usually anywhere from six to ten men were reported sick, and from three to six in confinement. Private John Morgan, 7th Infantry, a casual at the post left by his passing unit, died in the hospital on August 25, 1858.⁷³ Other than that there were no soldier deaths in the garrison itself.

Orders were issued in early April of 1859 to abandon the post, and the order reached the post on April 20, 1859. The troops were shortly after withdrawn to Fort Laramie.⁷⁴

This post was always known officially as "Camp at Platte

67. *Ibid.*

68. Phelps "Diary . . ." *op. cit.*; Hammond, *op. cit.*; Rodenbaugh, T. F., *From Everglade to Canon*, (New York: Nostrand, 1875); Gardner, Hamilton, "March of 2d Dragoons," *Annals of Wyoming*, April, 1955, pp. 43-60.

69. Special Orders #1, Headquarters Battalion, 4th Artillery, June 12, 1858; Special Orders #2, Headquarters, District of the Platte, July 18, 1858.

70. "Return of the Post at Platte Bridge," July 1858, RG94, National Archives.

71. *Ibid.*

72. Burton, *op. cit.*; archaeological field notes and sketches in the Thomas Nicholas collection; copies of sketches of Utah Expedition camp scenes obtained by Mr. Nicholas from the New York Historical Society.

73. Return of the Post at Platte Bridge, August, 1858.

74. Return of the Post at Platte Bridge, April, 1859.

Bridge" or "Post at Platte Bridge," but was informally called "Camp Payne."⁷⁵

Sir Richard Burton passed the site of the post in the stagecoach just after leaving Richard's store on August 16, 1860, and recorded:

Remounting, we passed a deserted camp, where in times gone by two companies of infantry have been stationed; a few stumps of crumbling wall, broken floorings, and depressions in the ground were the only remnants which the winds and rain had left.⁷⁶

As with the first post at Platte Bridge, many students long confused this post with the much later "Platte Bridge Station" located at Guinard's Bridge. This confusion need no longer prevail. Guinard's bridge was not yet in operation during the period in which this or the earlier post was occupied. In the period of these early posts Richard's Bridge was the *only* bridge in the area. Wagon Road survey maps and army tables of distances, along with those of the stage line in Burton's time, together with much total historical evidence, all confirm the relationship between the early posts and Richard's Bridge.⁷⁷ Further confirmation came to light archaeologically, as we shall discuss near the close of this paper.

John Richard, his brother Joseph, and their various business associates were diversifying their operations in the years 1858 and 1859. Participating in the Colorado gold rush, they opened a substantial store in Denver. They engaged in beef contracting and freighting for the army. They continued in the Indian trade.⁷⁸ The intensive military trade doubtless made those years the most profitable ones for the establishment at the bridge.

GUINARD'S BRIDGE

Such success was difficult to compete with effectively. Only one person tried it for long. This was another Frenchman (out of Canada, rather than St. Louis), Louis Guinard. Guinard came to the region in the 1840s and associated himself primarily with the Shoshoni, whereas Richard's connections were with the Sioux.⁷⁹

Guinard settled first at the Oregon Trail's first crossing of the

75. Post Returns of post.

76. Burton, *op. cit.*

77. "Fort Kearny, South Pass and Honey Lake Wagon Road, Rough Field Notes, *op. cit.*;" "Compass Book Kept by J. F. Mullaney . . .," *op. cit.*; Records relating to Wagon Roads, *op. cit.*

78. McDermott, John D. "John Baptiste Richard," *Mountain Men and the Fur Trade Series*, LeRoy Hafan, ed., (Glendale: The Arthur H. Clark Co., 1970).

79. Burton, *op. cit.*; also see Coutant, *op. cit.*, and for Richard's familial affiliation with the Sioux, see Hyde, *op. cit.*

Sweetwater, below well-known Independence Rock. Here, in 1857, he built a substantial stockaded trading post, carefully dated and described by members of the Lander expedition. This and a toll-bridge across the Sweetwater, were built at a very good time, for Guinard was able to profit from the heavy traffic generated by the wagon road surveys and the Utah Expedition.⁸⁰ He invested much of his profit from operations on the Sweetwater in a bigger-and-better bridge across the North Platte, which was ready for traffic by the rise of the stream in June of 1859. This bridge stood at a well-known site in the present historical park at Fort Caspar.⁸¹

Guinard built his bridge at the very time the stagecoach traffic across the old transcontinental trail was reaching its height of development. He managed to secure additional status for his establishment by its selection as an overnight stage stop. It was in its shorter lifetime fully as colorful a place as the older Richard Bridge. Sir Richard Burton arrived there at 4:15 p.m. on the afternoon of August 16, 1860. He says:

Our station lay near the upper crossing or second bridge, a short distance from the town. It was also built of timber at an expense of \$40,000, about a year ago, by Louis Guenot (*sic*) a Quebecquois, who has passed the last twelve years upon the plains. He appeared very downcast about his temporal prospects, and handed us over, with the *insouciance* of his race, to the tender mercies of his venerable squaw. The usual toll is \$.50, but from trains, especially of the Mormons, the owner will claim \$5; in fact, as much as he can get without driving them to the opposition lower bridge, or to the ferry boat. It was impossible to touch the squaw's supper: the tin cans that contained the coffee were slippery with grease, and the bacon looked as if it had been dressed side-by-side with 'boyaux'. I lighted my pipe and air-can in hand, sallied forth to look at the country.⁸²

The next morning Burton continued:

The morning was bright and clear, cool and pleasant. The last night's abstinence had told upon our squeamishness: we managed to secure a fowl, and with its aid we overcame our repugnance to the massive slices of eggless bacon. At 6:30 a.m. we hitched up, crossed the

80. The Wagon Road papers cited above contain very precise documentation on Guinard's establishment on the Sweetwater that conclusively prove its identity with the later "Sweetwater Station."

81. Lowe, Percival G. *Five Years a Dragoon*, (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1965); Lowe in his post-military career as a master-of-transportation for the QMD passed this way late in the winter of 1859 and mentions no activity at this point, going on, however, to describe his visit to the troops camped at Richard's Bridge; all of the tables of distances, journals, diaries, and the like for the Utah Expedition, most of which are included in works cited above, clearly refer to Richard's Bridge. We conclude therefore that Guinard's Bridge was not ready for use very much earlier than the high water of June, 1859, if then; see also Allen, O., *Allen's Guide Book and Map to the Gold Fields of Kansas and Nebraska and Great Salt Lake City*, R. A. Waters, Washington, 1859.

82. Burton, *op. cit.*

rickety bridge at a slow pace, and proceeded for the first time to ascend the left bank of the Platte.⁸³

We have already noted the fact that Guinard's primary Indian contacts were with the Shoshoni. His wife was from that tribe. It seems probable that they found themselves in a very uncomfortable and exposed position at the Platte Bridge as this was located in country at the extreme eastern frontier of Shoshoni range in the period. Just six miles away stood Richard's bridge and trading post. Richard's associates and employees were almost all married to women from various Sioux bands. In the normal coming and going of Sioux to Richard's camp lay a constant danger to Guinard and his family. Small wonder that he appeared "downcast" at the time of Burton's visit in 1860!⁸⁴ On October 4 of that year a band of Unkpapa and Blackfoot Sioux visiting from the country well to the north, engaged in a number of depredations along the trail. They killed a discharged soldier who was making his way back to the States about eight miles west of Deer Creek. They made off with four of Richard's horses, and swept on up the river to Guinard's.⁸⁵ Upper Platte Indian Agent Thomas Twiss, writing on October 11 from Deer Creek says that they:

"murdered on the 5th a boy of Louis Guinard's . . . The murdered boy was herding horses for his father Louis Guinard, who is an Indian Trader, or was out in search of the herd, when he was seen, as it is supposed by the Indians, and killed. His body was found yesterday, and bore unmistakable signs that he was shot with arrows, being also much cut and mangled."⁸⁶

We do not find much solid mention of Guinard in connection with this establishment after that period. Its operation must have remained fairly profitable through the end of its days as a stage station in the summer of 1862, and we are able to prove that the Richards had bought out Guinard's operation here at least as early as 1864.⁸⁷

Guinard left his post here at some time in that interval, then, and is said to have run a ferry on the Green River for a time. He prospected for gold in the South Pass country, ranched near Lander, and lived to past 92 years of age, dying on March 24, 1912.⁸⁸

Guinard's stay here then was brief, perhaps only two years, and

83. *Ibid.*

84. *Ibid.*

85. Letters, Thomas Twiss, Upper Platte Indian Agency to A. M. Robinson, Superintendent of Indian Affairs, October 10 and October 11, 1860, Upper Platte Agency Letters, National Archives.

86. *Ibid.*

87. Richard, Louis, deposition, *op. cit.*

88. Webb, Francis Seely. "Bridge Builder's Granddaughters Visit Site," *Casper Star Tribune*, Annual Wyoming Edition, March, 1964; Guinard obituary in the Bill Judge files, Fort Caspar.

for the most part it was the Richards, their relatives and employees who, here as well as at the Richard Bridge, dominate the commercial enterprises.

At the outbreak of the War for Southern Independence, Guinard's establishment consisted of the bridge itself, well documented by contemporary illustrations and subsequent archaeological evidence, and a log trading post near its south abutment. Guinard's post was a long, low structure consisting of several log-in-panel structures added on to one another. It housed the trading post, living quarters, and the office of the Pacific Telegraph.⁸⁹

Nearby stood the station of the Overland Stage (Central Overland California and Pikes Peak Express). Now, considerable documentation exists on the conformation of these various stage stations in the period. Generally, they consisted of a run of log-in-panel buildings that housed offices and living quarters, along with an attached corral for horses. The general effect is similar to that of a small stockaded fur trading post, with the important difference that the buildings faced out from, rather than in toward, the stock corral. An understanding of this pattern is important to some of the events here.⁹⁰

Once the army withdrew the main body of its troops from Utah, military freighting diminished markedly along the trail here. The years 1856-1860 saw a great deal of activity by military and contract surveyors for the government in the region. By 1859 and 1860, the results of much of their work was available in print in the form of guide books for travelers, published reports of government expeditions and the like.⁹¹ These surveys soon materially altered the patterns of travel in the region. The most important development was the widespread publication of data about a route that had been shown to Captain Howard Stansbury by Jim Bridger in 1850. This route traversed the Laramie Plain around the north end of the Snowy Range, and crossed the Continental Divide by way of the high desert basins of what is now southern Wyoming.⁹² It had been long known to the trappers. At its eastern end, this route could be easily reached by the so-called "Cherokee Trail" of California gold rush days,⁹³ that came up from the now-booming settlements of Colorado to pass between the Laramie and Snowy

89. Collins, Caspar, ground plans of buildings at "Platte Bridge Station."

90. Collins plans of Deer Creek Station, Camp Marshall, Sweetwater Station, South Pass Station, Three Crossings Station, St. Mary's Station, special collections, Colorado State University Library, Fort Collins, Colorado.

91. Allen, *op. cit.* is perhaps the best of the period, O. Allen having served as a guide for a number of the surveying expeditions.

92. Stansbury, *op. cit.*

93. Jackson, *op. cit.*

Ranges. It could also be reached via Cheyenne Pass from the South Platte drainage of western Nebraska.⁹⁴

Due to the economic advantages of combined hauls, much freight by 1861 was moving over the new route from Colorado to Utah and points west. So were many of the emigrants and other travelers. The cost-effectiveness of the new route was not lost on the proprietors of the newly reorganized Overland Stage company. In a variety of moves that ranged from political maneuvering through direct influence of the suddenly important Colorado militia, to manufactured and exaggerated Indian incidents, the company secured permission to move the stage line from the old California/Oregon route in the North Platte Valley to the new and now-to-become-known-as "Overland Route" across the trail through Bridger Pass.⁹⁵

The change was accomplished in midsummer of 1862. This left the stage stations on the old line abandoned except for the traders serving a trickle of emigration and of course the operators and repairmen of the Pacific Telegraph line.

The telegraph line now became a prime factor instead of an incidental item in the maintenance of the old route. Transcontinental communication was regarded as sufficiently important to be a matter of national interest at this particular time. As the regular troops withdrew from Fort Bridger and from Fort Laramie they were replaced by men of volunteer units.⁹⁶ Nevada and California troops garrisoned Fort Bridger.⁹⁷ The 2nd Battalion, 6th Ohio Volunteer Cavalry, came to Fort Laramie just before the stage line was moved. Its commanding officer, Lt. Col. William O. Collins, set out to reconnoiter the telegraph line to the South Pass country.⁹⁸ Collins did not immediately garrison the stations along the

94. Conkling, Roscoe P. and Margaret H. *The Butterfield Overland Mail, 1857-1859*, (Glendale: The Arthur H. Clark Co., 1947); Root, Frank A., and Connelly, William. *The Overland Mail*, (Columbus: Longs, 1950); the two eastern links are the "Bryan Trail" from Fort Leavenworth to Cheyenne Pass, and the "Collins Cut-Off" from Fort Laramie to the Laramie Plain. Maps of both exist in photocopy form at Fort Laramie.

95. *Ibid.*; Lass, William E. *From the Missouri to the Great Salt Lake*, (Lincoln: Nebraska Historical Society, 1973).

96. Rogers, Fred B. *Soldiers of the Overland*, (San Francisco, 1938).

97. *Ibid.*; Fort Bridger microfilms at the Wyoming State Archives and Historical Department.

98. The best sources on Collins' operations will be found in the orders and correspondence of the West Sub-District of the District of Nebraska, of the later North Sub-District of the District of the Plains, and Collins' own telegram books. All of these items are in RG98, National Archives, with microfilm copies at both Fort Laramie and at the Wyoming State Archives and Historical Department. A few scattered major items will be found in the *War of the Rebellion* and they are generally accessible through the series and volume indexes.

line. Emigrant accounts as late as July 20, 1862, show no evidence of military activity here.⁹⁹ At some point within the next month or so, Collins did send one company of his unit, commanded by Captain O. W. Van Winkle, to Guinard's Bridge.¹⁰⁰ Van Winkle telegraphed to Collins on October 27th, 1862, saying:

Have 28 men, 35 horses, 6 mules, quarters and stabling finished and good. 800 bu. corn, 31 tons hay, 50 cords wood . . . Have rations to first April.¹⁰¹

It seems highly improbable that Van Winkle's small force, with at the most, two wagons at their disposal, had completed all the indicated construction work, haying and wood cutting and hauling in the time they had been there. Rather, we are of the opinion that they simply moved into the abandoned stage company complex, making such improvements and additions as would fit it up as a good wintering point!

From 1862 through early 1865 "Platte Bridge Station" was at the most a one-company post. With the stage line and the freighting business gone from the trail and little emigrant traffic here, only the telegraph line gave this route any strategic importance. There was for a time little Indian trouble except occasional horse raids by the "friendly" Shoshoni.¹⁰²

As we indicated earlier, John Richard and his partners still owned the Richard Bridge and trading post. They also owned the Guinard Bridge and store. They used these posts as bases for trading ventures for the Indians of the region. They doubtless profited steadily from the soldier trade at Platte Bridge Station. They took hay, wood, and freighting contracts to supply the posts along the trail as opportunities arose.¹⁰³

Joe Richard ran a ranch on Clear Creek at the South Platte in Colorado.¹⁰⁴ John Richard apparently spent the winter of 1861-1862 at Richard Bridge.¹⁰⁵

Army punitive expeditions in the wake of the Minnesota Sioux uprising reached the northern high plains of Montana in 1864,

99. Hewitt, Randall. *Across the Plains and Over the Divide*, (New York: Argosy-Antiquarian Press, 1964), pp. 180-182.

100. Telegram, Capt. O. W. Van Winkle at Platte Bridge to Collins, Fort Laramie, October 27, 1862, RG98, National Archives.

101. *Ibid.*

102. Collins telegram books, *op. cit.*

103. Telegram, Collins to Lt. Glenn, Sweetwater Station, November 18, 1862; copy of notes on Baptiste "Big Bat" Pourier, McDermott Collection; Collister, Oscar, "Life of Oscar Collister," *Annals of Wyoming*, July 1930, pp. 343-361.

104. Pourier notes, *op. cit.*

105. *Ibid.*

and the expedition of the Colorado Volunteers against the Cheyennes in Colorado occurred in that same year.¹⁰⁶ Together they fanned high the flames of plains Indian hostility. The scattered garrisons of volunteers found their years of playing soldier at an end, and frequent skirmishing now at hand.¹⁰⁷

Lt. Col. Collins had been to Ohio in the summer of 1863, and returned with additional companies of volunteers that were consolidated with his old battalion to form a new regiment, the 11th Ohio Volunteer Cavalry.¹⁰⁸

During the spring of 1864, the Richard Bridge was the point of assembly and departure for the few wagon trains that used the Bozeman Trail. The Guinard Bridge served the same role for the small number of trains that took the Bridger Trail to Montana.¹⁰⁹

During 1864 John Richard became embroiled in some manner that is not well documented involving Indians and soldiers at the Platte Bridges. For a time late that summer, he and his family and Indian relatives were held under arrest at Fort Laramie.¹¹⁰ His son Louis Richard took all their property from the Richard Bridge establishment up to the former Guinard trading post which they owned, and did all his trading at that point until the spring of 1865,¹¹¹ when the Richards withdrew completely from the trade on the Upper Platte and established a new and substantial post at the

106. Ware, Eugene F. *Indian War of 1864*, (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1963); *War of the Rebellion*, *op. cit.*; Rogers, *op. cit.*

107. Record materials for this period are best presented in the *West Sub-District of the District of Nebraska . . .*, *op. cit.*

108. Spring, Agnes Wright, *Caspar Collins, The Life and Exploits of an Indian Fighter of the Sixties*, (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1969); Mrs. Spring's book contains a great deal of highly useful direct quote material from Collins family papers; her interpretations must be used with caution; other sources pertinent to the ensuing events include: Mokler, Alfred James, *Fort Caspar*, Casper, 1936; this is another useful study that must be utilized with care, as Mokler was apparently much influenced by the son of Lt. Henry C. Bretney of the 11th Ohio, and by highly colored Bretney reminiscences; Hebard, Grace R. and Brininstool, E. A., *The Bozeman Trail*, (Cleveland: The Arthur H. Clark Co., 1922) likewise contains much that is useful, and much colorful interpretation that must be used with care; for balance to the three above sets of accounts, we recommend: Fairfield, S. H., "The Eleventh Kansas Regiment at Platte Bridge," *Kansas Historical Collections*, 1904.

109. E. O. Railsback. "The Townsend Train," *Old Travois Trails*, Powder River Number, November/December, 1940; Weaver, David B. "Captain Townsend's Battle on Powder River," *Contributions to the Historical Society of Montana*, Vol. VIII.

110. Letter, Agent John Loree to Major Wood at Fort Laramie, August 10, 1864, Upper Platte Indian Agency Letters; McDermott, *op. cit.*

111. Richard, Louis, deposition, *op. cit.*; Knight, Joseph, depositions, *op. cit.*; Pourier notes, *op. cit.*

point where the Overland Trail crossed Rock Creek, west of the Laramie Plains.¹¹²

The 11th Ohio Volunteer Cavalry received reinforcements at its posts along the old trail in the spring of 1865, as Indian hostility blossomed out in time with the new grass. By early summer of that year elements of the 11th Kansas Volunteer Cavalry and the 6th U. S. Volunteer Infantry joined the small garrison at Platte Bridge Station.¹¹³ There is no evidence that the structures there were enlarged to accommodate them. Normal practice would have been for them to camp in tents next to the post.

It is not our purpose here to re-examine the tangled body of evidence and opinion surrounding the "Red Buttes" fight and the "Caspar Collins Fight" of July, 1865. They have been extensively investigated by proponents of various points of view. These two relatively minor but well-publicized related incidents did put "Platte Bridge Station" on the map almost to the exclusion of all of the earlier military and civilian activity in the previous two decades.¹¹⁴

As part of the build up attendant to the Connor Expedition that summer the garrison at Platte Bridge Station expanded. By November of 1865 the post was known as Fort Caspar in honor of the daring young Lieutenant Collins whose bravado cost his life here in July.¹¹⁵ It was titled with his first name because another Camp Collins in Colorado was already named for his father.¹¹⁶ The garrison now included elements of the 11th Ohio, the 6th U. S. V., and the 6th West Virginia Veteran Volunteer Cavalry, for a total of 343 men.¹¹⁷

As winter came on, these volunteers needed building material for huts and needed fuel for their fires. As a labor-saving expe-

112. Pourier notes, *op. cit.*; Little Dog, deposition, June 4, 1887, file 7868-123 Indian Claims files, National Archives; Richard, Peter, deposition June 4, 1884, file 7868-123, Indian Claims papers, National Archives.

113. Fairfield, *op. cit.*

114. See items cited in 108 above, for some of the accounts that provided the publicity for these events; other important materials will be found in: Vaughn, J. W. *The Battle of Platte Bridge*, (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1963); Hafen, LeRoy R. *The Powder River Campaigns and Sawyer's Expedition*, (Glendale: The Arthur H. Clark Co., 1961); Brown, Dee, *The Galvanized Yankees*, (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1963); Lottinville, Savoie, ed., *Life of George Bent . . .*, (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1968).

115. Spring, *op. cit.*

116. Frazer, Robert W. *Forts of the West*, (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1967).

117. Return for Fort Caspar, November, 1865, RG94, National Archives.

dient they went down to Richard's Bridge and disassembled and hauled it to Fort Caspar to supply this need.¹¹⁸

In early summer, 1866 regular army soldiers replaced the volunteers. These men, of the 18th U. S. Infantry, quickly set about demolishing the huts of the volunteers and constructing a new, intentionally permanent post. Construction activity under the supervision of Lt. G. S. Carpenter, the post quartermaster, was well under way by July 11, 1866. At that time he forwarded estimates for finished lumber and millwork and hardware.¹¹⁹ Construction activity continued at the post through the rest of that year and on into the summer of 1867.¹²⁰

The result was that the old trading posts had a new "neighbor" in the form of an extensive layout of barracks, officer quarters, warehouses, stables, and numerous other structures. Most of the major buildings were of logs, with some warehouses and sheds of slabs. The new buildings overran some of the older building sites. Surviving ground plans make it possible to tie the succession of buildings together locationally, as illustrated.¹²¹

This newly built post of Fort Caspar had one brief period of importance in 1867. In January, it was designated as the new headquarters post for the reorganized 18th U. S. Infantry, split by the army reorganization act into three standard sized regiments. Colonel Henry B. Carrington, had previously chosen to command the new unit that was to bear the old regiment's name. He was reassigned to Fort Caspar in the wake of the Fetterman disaster, which was only one symptom of the breakdown of command relationships and morale at Fort Phil Kearny.¹²²

During his brief stay there, Carrington was wounded by the accidental discharge of his "Navy Colt" revolver. The wound resulted in his early retirement a few years later. An interesting sidelight is the fact that the Wyoming State Museum acquired this revolver just a few years ago.¹²³

In 1867 and 1868 the Union Pacific Railway pushed out across southern Wyoming. With it came new military posts along the rail

118. Letter, W. G. Bullock to Col. G. B. Dandy, July 1, 1866, voucher submitted to QMG by John Richard, March 21, 1866, letter, A. Caldwell to S. W. Rucker QMG, October 8, 1867, letter, A. Caldwell to S. W. Rucker QMG, Dec. 2, 1867, letter, Col. John E. Smith to James G. Payne, August 25, 1869, all in Letters Received, Office of the Quartermaster General, RG92, National Archives; Knight and Louis Richard depositions, *op. cit.*

119. Letters, G. S. Carpenter to G. B. Dandy, July 11, 1866.

120. Letters, Carpenter to Dandy, QMG files.

121. Ground plans of Fort Caspar, 1867, National Archives, and accompanying descriptive material on structures.

122. See greater detail on the background of Carrington's arrival at Fort Caspar, Murray, R. A., *Military Posts in the Powder River Country of Wyoming, 1865-1894*, (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1968).

123. Carrington, Margaret. *Ab-Sa-Ra-Ka, Land of Massacre . . .* 1870.

line: Fort D. A. Russell, Fort Sanders and Fort Fred Steele. Now the link across the continent was near completion. The army planned to withdraw from the Powder River country, since their activity there was primarily a planned diversion to allow rail construction to proceed unimpeded by major Indian activity.¹²⁴

In conjunction with the new rail lines, the Pacific Telegraph built a new line out across the territory in the spring and summer of 1867, following the projected chain of railroad stations. This eliminated the need to maintain the old chain of posts and stations on the original telegraph line.¹²⁵

At this same time, the army concluded to abandon Fort Caspar in favor of a new post on the North Platte at LaPrele Creek. This new post, Fort Fetterman, would, along with the existing Fort Laramie, form a base for any future operations into the Sioux country to the north. Its site had the advantage of an easy-gradient wagon road of only eighty-nine miles to the nearest projected railroad station.¹²⁶

Through the late summer and fall of 1867 the troops kept busy hauling equipment, supplies, and "all useful materials" down to the new post.¹²⁷

Major E. B. Grimes, district quartermaster, pointed out the urgency of housing the command at Fort Fetterman by the onset of winter, and stated that only by use of the logs from the buildings at Fort Caspar could this be accomplished. Thus, the recently built Fort Caspar structures were dismantled and used to put up the first log structures of Fort Fetterman.¹²⁸

Today one of the early log officer quarters at Fort Fetterman survives, restored by the Wyoming Recreation Commission and the Wyoming State Museum. We are reasonably certain this structure is one of those made of logs taken from the quarters at Fort Caspar in November and December of 1867.

AFTERMATH

So ends the military story of the bridges and posts on the Upper Platte. What of the Guinard Bridge? Local folklore holds it was

124. Murray, *op. cit.*

125. Telegram Adjutant General, Department of the Platte, to Col. Dye, Fort Fetterman, October 14, 1867; Letters and Telegrams sent, Headquarters, Department of the Platte, RG98, National Archives.

126. Letters Received, Letters Sent, Returns, Orders, Fort Fetterman will be found in microfilm form (some 20-odd rolls) at Wyoming State Archives and Historical Department.

127. *Ibid.*

128. Letter, Major E. B. Grimes to Chief Quartermaster, Department of the Platte, December 4, 1867, Fort Laramie Letters Sent, RG98, National Archives.

"burned by Indians" following the withdrawal of the troops.¹²⁹ I seriously doubt this, as the same cause has been applied to virtually every structure abandoned by troops in the region over a long period. It is too convenient an excuse in a region where grass fires, lightning and occasional non-Indian acts of arson are all common. My conjecture is that the troops stripped the useable superstructure of its timbers at the same time they salvaged the other materials at the post in 1867.

The CY Ranch of open range cattle days had a headquarters near the old post, but there is no mention in their letters of any use of any surviving structures. Sketches of the CY house show it clearly to be of later construction.¹³⁰

A few historians kept the thread of history reasonably straight on these locations. Josephine Richard Pourier visited the site of Richard's Bridge in the early 1920s and pointed out its features to A. J. Mokler, noted local historian.¹³¹ A. B. Ostrander, a one-time clerk in the Headquarters of Department of the Platte in Omaha, visited both sites in the same period, and understood their relationship.¹³²

In a booming and developing Casper, the older Richard site was soon forgotten in the wake of publicity attendant to city and federal efforts in the mid-1930s to memorialize the Platte Bridge Station site associated with Caspar Collins. Mokler and others did archaeology on the site with the aid of Caspar Collins' ground plans, but unfortunately without the military records on later construction. Following this a \$60,000 project reconstructed close approximations of the 1865 station and trading post which today form the buildings of Fort Caspar Park and Museum, a manned interpretive facility serving thousands of visitors each year.¹³³

Developers breaking ground for housing at the north edge of Evansville in 1963 discovered an old cemetery, which proved to

129. We have examined the Fort Fetterman structure closely both before and after restoration, and find it to be a re-assembly of logs from Fort Caspar, rather than a precise re-assembly of a structure. The troops doing the work would have preferred to simply sort and salvage logs by kinds and sizes than to try to rebuild individual structures when moving them from site to site.

130. Letter, John David to Bob David, May 23, 1931, Bob David collection, Casper College.

131. Mokler, Alfred J. *History of Natrona County*, (Chicago: R. R. Donnelley, 1923), pp. 109-110.

132. Ellison, R. S. and Ostrander, A. B. "The Platte Bridge Fight," in *After Sixty Years*, reprinted in *Winners of the West*, Vol. III, March 15, 1926.

133. Mokler, A. J. *Fort Caspar*, *op. cit.*, Judge, O. W. *Old Fort Caspar*, (Casper: Fort Caspar Commission, nd [c. 1968]).

contain both military and Indian graves.¹³⁴ Examination of the uniform and accoutrement recoveries from these graves proved them related to the period of the Utah Expedition.¹³⁵ Subsequent research by local historian Thomas Nicholas produced basic documentation proving the association of the 1858-1859 post with the Richard Bridge. Additional archaeology located the chimney footings of the camp, the bridge piers, the site of several of Richard's buildings.¹³⁶ The writer obtained additional data from the National Archives on military operations and surveying operations of the government in the area.

(In the same period, John D. McDermott (now of the President's Advisory Council for Historic Preservation), Brian Jones of the English Westerners, and the late Frank Aplan of Rushville, Nebraska, and Dr. John S. Gray, now of Fort Collins, Colorado, were untangling the extensive new material they found on the various members of the Richard family. All told, the additions to the new material on the site and on its key characters in the past ten years have been quite significant in terms of a better understanding of many aspects of the history of this part of Wyoming, of southern Montana, northern Colorado and parts of the Dakotas and Nebraska.¹³⁷)

What of the key personalities in the story? As we said earlier, Louis Guinard went on to other ventures, lived a long and successful life and left a host of admiring descendants. John Richard, Sr. spent a great deal of money financing the trading, ranching and freighting ventures of his sons. He lost heavily in property through depredations at the height of the hostile activity in the region.¹³⁸ He continued to trade with the Sioux, and his travels in the Indian country finally cost him his life in a fight with the Indians at the Running Water (Niobrara) crossing of the Fort Laramie/Black Hills trail in the fall of 1875.¹³⁹ Carrington, who might have told much of his brief stay at Fort Caspar, nursed grievances developed at Fort Phil Kearny for nearly forty years after his retirement to the exclusion of more useful historical work within the range of his

134. Annetti, William, and Carpenter, Robert, "Physical Report of the Reshaw (*sic*) Burials," unpublished manuscript, dated March 30, 1963, in Thomas Nicholas collection.

135. *Ibid.*

136. Map of archaeological finds, unpublished manuscript in the Thomas Nicholas files (original by Bill Morgan, April, 1964; Thomas Nicholas, various articles in: *Frontier Times and New Oregon Trail Reader*, Vol. 1, No. 1, 1966, Evansville, Wyoming).

137. McDermott, *op. cit.*; Jones, Brian, "Those Wild Reshaw Boys," in *Sidelights on the Sioux Wars*, (London: English Westerners' Society, Special Publication 2, 1967); Gray, John S., "A Triple Play," *The Westerners Brand Book*, Vol. 26, No. 3, (Chicago: May, 1969).

138. McDermott, *op. cit.*

139. Gray, *op. cit.*

skills.¹⁴⁰ Colonel Collins went home to resume a successful law practice after turning in final reports that helped to shape military operations on the plains from 1865 to 1868.¹⁴¹ Many Richard descendants and adherents played an important part in the 1876-1877 campaigns that settled the regional Indian question as a military problem. Some lived on among the Sioux, contributing significantly to their adjustment to the reservation life and the surrounding economic and social institutions.¹⁴²

The existing development at Fort Caspar is a valuable facility for interpreting history of the region to the traveler and resident alike. We believe it should receive the continued support of city, state and federal historical agencies in this good work.

The entire complex of military and civilian sites at Richard's Bridge lies on State of Wyoming land, administered by the State Land Board. We would hope that it will be placed on the National Register, protected and eventually developed into another quality historical park. Three old forts are certainly at least nine times as good for attracting and holding visitors to the region as one old fort!

140. The height of Carrington's rationalization of his role in the region, in a defensive form, is in a set of scrapbooks he presented to the Sheridan County Carnegie Library (now the Fulmer Memorial Library), Sheridan, in 1908.

141. Spring, *op. cit.*

142. Anderson, Harry H. "Fur Traders as Fathers," unpublished manuscript presented at the Rosebud Sioux History Conference, Rosebud, South Dakota, May 1968.

P. J. Quealy: Wyoming's Coal Man and Town Builder

By

GLEN BARRETT

A forty-year-old Irish coal operator and his Pennsylvania financier established a townsite near their camp and mines in western Wyoming, just two years before Thorstein Veblen's *Theory of the Leisure Class* appeared in 1899. In a later work, Veblen criticized country towns like the one these men founded, while William Allen White considered the western trade center to be a great American institution. Many towns, Veblen believed, were the collusions of interested parties who speculated in real estate, and that is what Patrick J. Quealy and Mahlon S. Kemmerer did when they established their town in Wyoming. These men were not acquainted with either Veblen or White, and if they read Henry George's *Progress and Poverty*, published in 1880, his "unearned increment" thesis did not intimidate them.¹

Like most Americans, Quealy and Kemmerer did not concern themselves with the questions that the reformers of their generation raised. They acquired their townsite legally, and they felt that they were entitled to the profits that were to be gained through the sale of building lots. He who created the industry that served to increase land values, was entitled to the profits gained through the disposition of the land at the optimum time. This popular "Gilded Age" philosophy was seldom challenged over the years.

Founded in 1897, and incorporated in 1899, Kemmerer soon became one of Wyoming's best-known coal and ranching communities. Located in Lincoln County on the Ham's Fork River, Kemmerer's citizens eagerly made their town the county seat when Uinta, one of Wyoming's original five counties, was divided in 1912. Since it was founded by both coal and railroad interests, Veblen considered a town such as Kemmerer to be a typical western community; it was the product of special interests or the specu-

1. Thorstein Veblen, *Absentee Ownership and Business Enterprise*; Max Lerner, ed., *The Portable Veblen*. (New York: Viking Press, 1948), pp. 407, 430; William Allen White, *The Changing West: An Economic Theory About Our Golden Age* (New York: Macmillan, 1939), pp. 82-83; Page Smith, *As a City Upon a Hill: The Town in American History*. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1971), p. 295.

lation of interested parties. By 1902 Kemmerer was a thriving, energetic, independent service center for hundreds of miners, ranchers, professional or business people and their families.

Patrick J. Quealy gained his coal experience in the mines of Missouri, Washington, Wyoming and Montana, where his Bozeman Coal Company operated that territory's first commercial coal mine. Returning to Wyoming in 1886, he was appointed the territorial Inspector of Mines by Francis E. Warren, but Quealy left this position, and joined with Laramie bank and cattle men who organized the Rock Springs Coal Company in 1887. Quealy tried to interest Marcus Daly in Wyoming coal, but the Montana "copper king" was not yet ready to invest in coal lands outside of his own territory. Quealy managed the Rock Springs Coal firm until 1894, when he became associated with the well-known Mormon, George Q. Cannon, and his sons in a property called the Wonder Gold Mine at Mercur, Utah, but coal remained Quealy's chief interest. Stock raising at Shirley Basin also occupied the thirty-seven-year-old Irishman, and he began to acquire both grazing and coal lands in the Ham's Fork country where he might engage in either, if not both, of these occupations. He also leased, then purchased the Carbon County ranch owned by George Bird Grinnell who had acquired Wyoming land after coming West with the 1879 O. C. Marsh expedition.²

Most of Uinta County's desirable grazing land, and those places where outcroppings suggested that valuable coal deposits might be discovered, had been alienated by the 1890s. The villages called Opal, Ham's Fork, Fossil, and Diamondville, all on the Oregon Short Line, were established before the mid-nineties. The official land policy of the United States provided generously for the rancher, the miner and the farmer. Nevertheless, Quealy was able to purchase several homesteads. Aided by the Ham's Fork merchant, W. S. Post, he entered into preliminary negotiations with settlers who held a filing or deed in a combined tract consisting of 2560 acres of coal and grazing land near Diamondville.

Quealy, not satisfied with the gold mine at Mercur, wanted to develop the Oyster Ridge coals above the Diamond Coal and Coke Company's property. He traveled to New York in January, 1895, bearing a letter of introduction to Mahlon S. Kemmerer of the Carbon Iron and Steel Company, and other large coal and metal operations. This Civil War veteran liked Quealy's plan, and the

2. Elizabeth Arnold Stone, *Uinta County, Its Place in History*. (Laramie: Laramie Printing Co., 1924), pp. 253-254, 256-257; Rita McDonald and Merrill G. Burlingame, "Montana's First Commercial Coal Mine," *Pacific Northwest Quarterly*, January, 1956, pp. 23-28; Thomas S. Chamblin, ed., *The Historical Encyclopedia of Wyoming*, Vol. I. (np: Wyoming Historical Institute, 1954), p. 150.

two men agreed to form a partnership. Kemmerer made his home in Mauch Chunk (Jim Thorpe), Pennsylvania where the Molly Maguire trial of June, 1876, had been conducted. By 1895 he maintained an office in his hometown, but Kemmerer's firms also had offices in New York City, Boston, and Philadelphia.³

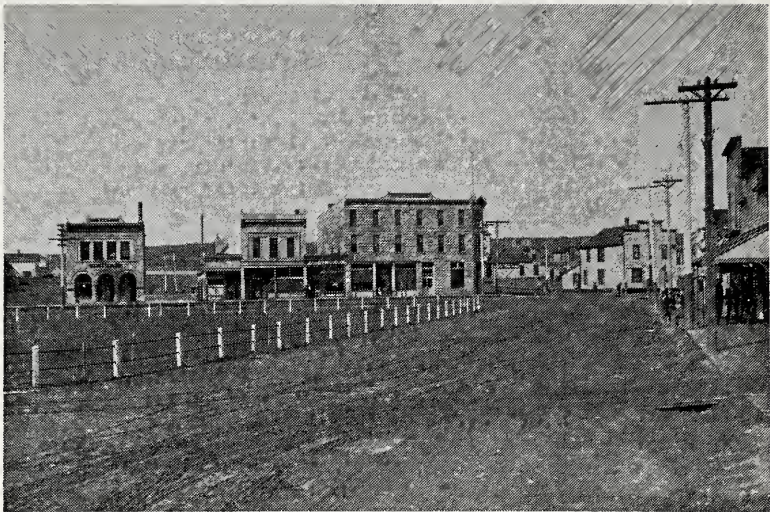
The Union Pacific went into receivership in October, 1893, and by 1895 about one-half of the road's branches had been lopped off by foreclosure. But when Quealy held his first meeting with Kemmerer the fate of the Oregon Short Line was yet uncertain. It was this line that passed through the Ham's Fork country, and both men felt that the success of Quealy's proposed coal development depended largely upon the future status of the Short Line. They should wait, Quealy and Kemmerer decided, until it became independent. During the next two years they followed this matter closely. When the separation of the railroads was completed in 1897, Quealy and Kemmerer decided to begin coal production. They began building a camp for the miners, but they had not yet decided to establish a town.⁴

Quealy met with Kemmerer in the Scranton law office of his son, John, in May 1897, and these three men formed not one, but four organizations; The Kemmerer Coal Company, the Frontier Supply Company, Ham's Fork Cattle Company, and the Uinta Improvement Company. Quealy was convinced that he had found the ideal partners, and if evidence which might suggest that he ever regretted his decision to pool his resources with the Kemmerers ever existed, it was not preserved.

Uinta Improvement was a land company but the articles of incorporation made no mention of any intent to establish a town. Quealy and Kemmerer decided that they would retain the ownership of the land near the mines where a company store, boarding houses and tenements for the miners were constructed by their Frontier Supply Company. Nevertheless, Quealy and the Kemmerers soon disposed of certain tracts removed from the immediate area of their coal operations. They provided the Short Line with a right-of-way for the spur to the mine, and a depot site plus other property in order to assure convenient service, and coal sales to the railroad. The Uinta Improvement Company was not a town-site company. When the decision was reached to establish a town, Frontier, just a mile from the company camp at the mines, a new

3. P. J. Quealy to M. S. Kemmerer, Chicago, 2-15-95, 3-30-95, 4-5-95; M. S. Kemmerer to P. J. Quealy, Mauch Chunk, 4-5-95, letter files, Kemmerer Coal Company, Frontier, Wyoming; Wayne G. Broehl, Jr., *The Molly Maguires*. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1965), p. 308.

4. Robert G. Athearn, *Union Pacific Country*. (San Francisco: Rand McNally, 1971), pp. 315-316, 322; Nelson Trottmann, *History of the Union Pacific*. (New York: Augustus M. Kelley, 1966; 1923), pp. 277-278.



—Stimson Photo Collection
Wyoming State Archives and Historical Department
EARLY DAY STREET SCENE, KEMMERER



—Stimson Photo Collection
Wyoming State Archives and Historical Department
W. S. POST STORE, KEMMERER

organization, the Short Line Land and Improvement Company, was organized for that purpose.⁵

Quealy entered into negotiations with several of the Oregon Short Line's executives, Calvin, Bancroft, and O'Melveny, with two propositions in mind, the construction of the track to the mine, and the building of a town south of Frontier. Railroad participation in town lot speculation had been a common practice for many years, and Quealy was quite certain that the Short Line people would be interested in his proposal. Quealy had numerous applications for building lots, and more than one request for the construction of a commercial building. The partners decided that the land at the mine would not be leased or sold, but the development of a town removed from the immediate area, they concluded, when the demand for ground increased daily, would be a profitable venture, and the Short Line executives agreed.⁶

The townsite company was formally organized in the spring of 1898 after the railroad people and the Quealy-Kemmerer partnership worked out a satisfactory stock split. Each party shared equally in the Short Line Land and Improvement Company, which held title to the surface of the land only; coal veins were reserved by Quealy and Kemmerer. Too, certain pieces of land were excepted in the deal because Quealy had sold several town lots in the fall of 1897 while busily preparing for the production of coal. Shipments started in October, and Mahlon Kemmerer was on the scene to witness this important beginning. When he returned to Pennsylvania, he agreed to allow Quealy to name the new town Kemmerer.

The town was independent of the coal company from its inception; land was sold to anyone who wanted a building lot, not just the miners or other employees. This was not the case at Frontier. Here both the ground and the houses were rented, not leased or sold. Yet several men were allowed to build their own cabins on company land at Frontier because of an acute housing shortage during the fall of 1897. This aberration of policy was soon to be regretted by both Quealy and the squatters. Marcus Daly purchased Diamondville and the mines there not long after coal shipments started at Frontier. Daly made a deal with union organ-

5. M. S. Kemmerer to P. J. Quealy, Mauch Chunk, 5-28-97, 6-21-97; the articles of incorporation of the four companies are located in the Archives and Records Division, Wyoming State Archives and Historical Department.

6. P. J. Quealy to M. S. Kemmerer, Ham's Fork, 7-12-97, 7-30-97; Paul W. Gates, "The Role of the Land Speculator in Western Development," *The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, July, 1942, pp. 317, 329; the discovery of mineral deposits tempted many promoters to build a town nearby; see Everett Dick, *The Lure of the Land*. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1970), p. 263.

izers, and a strike was soon launched by the Western Federation of Miners.

Fearing the disruption of his embryo operations, Quealy, a determined non-union man, instructed his chief engineer, Frank Manley, to post this notice: "After today, the Kemmerer Mines will be closed for an indefinite period. All miners and other underground workmen will be no longer in the employ of this company." The houses that had been built for the miners were to be vacated within ten days. The rent for those who refused to move was doubled, and all persons who owned cabins on company land were ordered to "vacate the land at once." The cabins that were not removed would be purchased at a reasonable price, Quealy and Manley declared. The next day, December 15, 1897, Manley posted the names of 62 men who were to be employed at Mine No. 1, and a day later a third notice announced all "former employees of Mines No. 2 and 3 are hereby employed and will be expected to work tomorrow on their respective shifts."⁷ The "agitators" were expelled in this manner, and it was not until 1907 that the United Mine Workers of America became established at Frontier, Diamondville, and other coal camps in southwestern Wyoming.⁸

The officers of the Kemmerer Coal Company governed Frontier, but not the new town constructed one mile to the south. Here the railroad officers were given several blocks for their personal use or speculation, while businessmen and miners could purchase building lots for \$125 or more, depending on the location. Unlike George Mortimer Pullman, the sleeping-car executive whose company town was aptly called a "compulsory heaven," Quealy and his associates did not attempt to build a model industrial town. Frontier, like Pullman, Illinois, was owned by the company, but Kemmerer was clearly a speculative venture. The establishment of the coal company created the necessity for providing housing for the miners, and this need was met, largely, at Frontier when the boarding houses and the tenements were constructed by the company. But it soon became obvious that the utilization and productiveness of the land had attracted people who wanted to engage in professional and service occupations.⁹

7. "Articles of Incorporation, Short Line Land and Improvement Co.," Archives and Records Division, WSAHD; P. J. Quealy to J. C. O'Malveny, Frontier, 12-20-97; M. S. Kemmerer to P. J. Quealy, Mauch Chunk, 11-11-97, 12-8-97, 12-21-97.

8. P. J. Quealy to R. S. Shaw, Frontier, 12-13-97; Frank M. Manley, letterbook, 12-14-97, 12-15-97, 12-16-97; M. S. Kemmerer to P. J. Quealy, Mauch Chunk, 12-30-97.

9. P. J. Quealy to J. P. Rosenberg and H. E. Christmas, Frontier, 11-4-98; Ray Ginger, *Altgeld's America*. (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1965; 1958), p. 143.

The California newspaperman, economist, and reformer, Henry George, writing in the 1870s, concluded that "if one man owned all the land accessible to any community, he could . . . demand any price or condition for its use he saw fit," and this was the case at Frontier. When faced with a strike, Quealy used the power which land ownership bequeathed, and the agitators were forced to leave. In the case of the new town, Quealy did not design for himself the autocratic position which the very nature of a company town bestowed upon the "Captain of Industry." Nevertheless, his participation in the townsite company placed Quealy among those whom Henry George and other critics of 19th century industrial society castigated. George believed, but failed to convince all but the few who joined his "Single Tax Clubs," that land could yield no rent and have no value until someone was willing to give labor, or the results of labor, for the privilege of using it. Population, he concluded, caused land prices to increase, and this is precisely what happened at the Ham's Fork location after Quealy opened his mine.¹⁰

Quealy hired John W. Sammon, an Evanston, Wyoming, lawyer to draw up Kemmerer's incorporation papers. The prime mover in getting the town established, Quealy had no intention of administering the affairs of the growing community indefinitely. In fact, town government held little interest for him, and he was anxious for the next step in his town-building project to be accomplished; that of electing a regularly constituted board of local officials who would assume the responsibility for drafting the ordinances.¹¹

Incorporated, Kemmerer became independent of the special interests that surveyed and platted the townsite. The Short Line Land and Improvement Company remained a significant community organization, but as the building lots were sold the influence of the townsite company diminished. The property owners became responsible for the affairs of the town. Quealy held no office in the town government, but since he was the secretary of the townsite company, president of the bank founded in 1900, and the publisher of the newspaper, he was the town's most influential citizen. Evidence that he was autocratic was not recorded in the town's records. However, since Quealy had the power to grant or withhold property sales and loans, one might conclude without consulting the records that he had disagreements at times.

Some people felt that Quealy thought he owned both Kemmerer and Frontier. A brewing company, for example, became unhappy

10. Henry George, *Progress and Poverty*. (New York: Robert Schalkenbach Foundation, 1955; 1880), pp. 166-167, 242-243.

11. P. J. Quealy to John Salmon [sic], 6-29-98; to J. W. Sammon, Frontier, 12-3-98; *Diamondville News*, 1-25-98, p. 1.

and turned to the Short Line with its grievance. When Quealy heard about the incident he wrote this comment to the railroad's W. H. Bancroft: "I decline to pay . . . any attention to this class of correspondence. I find plenty of legitimate business to occupy my time. These people must surely be under the influence of their own product . . ."¹²

Coal mining and related things kept Quealy so busy that he did not have time to personally involve himself in the administrative problems of the town. By 1899 the coal company employed nearly 300 men at Frontier where Quealy was not only the employer but the "mayor." Some of the miners eventually formed ethnic associations, but the officers of the coal company made the decisions at Frontier that were left to the town council at Kemmerer. There, citizens owned their own property, and elected the town's officers, but they were dependent on Quealy's Frontier Supply Company for their electricity and water. Occasionally a problem arose which could not be resolved without Quealy's assistance, yet the town officers prided themselves on their independence. Some administrations were anti-Quealy, but the coal operator usually tried to respond tactfully when complaints reached his desk at Frontier.

Crippling or fatal mine accidents and other tragedies saddened the Kemmerer-Frontier-Diamondville people all too frequently. Two boys drowned in Ham's Fork when they hitched a ride on a delivery wagon which overturned while the driver was attempting to ford the rushing stream in May, 1899. The town mourned this incident, but life in the community had its brighter moments, too. The "Quealy Military Band" assisted the Frontier drama group with the presentation of a production called "Ruined by Drink," and the farce "My Neighbor's Wife," in April, 1899, and there were many other activities of a similar nature during the months that followed.¹³

Two hundred men died in May, 1900, in a Scofield, Utah, coal mine disaster, and a later explosion at Diamondville claimed the lives of fourteen miners. The "horror at Hanna" in Carbon County, Wyoming, killed more than two hundred men, and another explosion snuffed out the lives of 60 miners in April, 1908. Frontier was yet to experience similar tragedies; in January, 1912, six men were killed, and an explosion took 99 lives in August, 1923. Mothers became widows, and children were left fatherless when huge sections of the roof fell without warning in the rooms down in the mines. The "grim reaper" was a frequent visitor in

12. P. J. Quealy to W. H. Bancroft, Frontier, 9-2-00.

13. *Diamondville News*, 4-12-99, p. 1; 5-10-99, p. 1.

the area, and the men who worked underground were most often the victims.¹⁴

Prostitution and gambling were tolerated in Kemmerer, but the "inmates of the houses of ill-fame" were subjected to a monthly fine of \$3 each until September, 1903, when this "tax" was increased to \$5 a month. The fine for gambling was \$8, unless the saloonkeeper obtained a license for \$75 a year. Thirsty men could satisfy themselves quite readily since there were numerous dispensers of alcoholic beverages in Kemmerer and the nearby camps. Town councilman, Lime Huggins, put up a sign in his saloon which read, "Don't buy a drink before filling the mouths of your babies." His place became quite popular in spite of this sign and other moral admonitions posted by Huggins. One patron claimed that he went to "Preachin' Lime's church" because he could "repent while sinning and get the whole thing over with at once."¹⁵

The incidence of violence, accidents and social problems may have been greater in Kemmerer than in Evanston, Cokeville, or other older towns in the area. However, Kemmerer's spirited citizens were not necessarily accident prone, nor were they any less disciplined than their neighbors. Most of the men were employed in the mines or other hazardous occupations. Too, the town became a favorite watering spot for non-resident characters. Some of the young men who came into town from the ranches threw off the restraints that held them in check at home as soon as they reached the town. Unsophisticated or reprehensible conduct, rather than violence, checkered Kemmerer's night life. Overt racial discrimination, and mob violence such as that which Rock Springs experienced, was not observable in Kemmerer.

Several ethnic groups organized themselves for social reasons and the Finns, Slavs, Italians and Scots were the most active. The main wave of Finnish migration to America coincided with the rise of nationalism in Finland, therefore, most of the miners brought with them intense loyalty to the cultural values of their native land. In June, 1902, the Finlanders of Wyoming celebrated the annual Midsummers Day in Kemmerer. Delegations from most of the towns along the Union Pacific enjoyed the music provided by the Rock Springs and Hanna bands. A celebration on the birthday of Bobby Burns took place each January, and the Slovenski Dom

14. Thomas G. Alexander, "From Dearth to Deluge: Utah's Coal Industry," *Utah Historical Quarterly*, Summer, 1963, p. 240. *Kemmerer Camera*, 7-4-03, p. 1, 12-9-05, p. 1, 4-4-08, p. 1, 8-17-23, p. 1.

15. "Minute Book," Kemmerer town council, 12-2-01, 3-3-02, 3-26-02, 9-1-02; Mary Lou Pence and Lola M. Homsher, *The Ghost Towns of Wyoming* (New York: Hastings House, 1956), pp. 205-206.

in Diamondville, "Sloppy Dome" or "Bucket of Blood," was the area's most popular community center.¹⁶

A terrible clash between Caucasians and Chinese resulted in the death of twenty-eight Asians at Rock Springs in September, 1885, but Orientals were welcome in Kemmerer. At Evanston the Chinese were excluded for a while, and no Orientals were allowed in the Almy mine after 1885. Many of the Kemmerer people had once resided in Rock Springs or Evanston where white relationships with the Chinese were quite harmonious after the 1885 tragedy, and little or no animosity existed between the races in Kemmerer. However, the Chinese were not numerous, and the Japanese were largely miners who lived in the camps.¹⁷

The Ladies Aid Society of the Methodist-Episcopal Church presented a social or concert several times each year in one of the opera houses, and the Mormons and the Catholics conducted social activities, particularly during the winter months when almost everyone had more time for evening programs. Most of Kemmerer's churchgoers not only attended the worship service of their own faith, they also participated in the social programs of the several churches. For example, Susan Quealy, a Catholic, was the program chairman when the Methodist Sunday School observed Children's Day in June, 1902.¹⁸ Roy Mason, who worked in Quealy's bank, sang his favorite songs before the several congregations.

James C. Penney, who had been employed in the Golden Rule Store at Evanston, came to Kemmerer in 1902. Deciding to become independent, Penney asked Frank Pfeiffer, cashier of the First National Bank for a \$500 loan. But when Quealy was consulted, Pfeiffer found that his employer was not enthusiastic. Penney's proposed enterprise, a cash store, could not succeed, the bankers believed, because so many of the men were miners and were paid but once a month. "Most of them are clean out of money before the month is half over, and some of them seldom see any money," the cashier told Penney. The company stores at Frontier, Cumberland, and Diamondville used script which was issued against the miner's pay, and some of the men with large

16. *Kemmerer Camera*, 6-28-02, p. 1; the ethnocentrism of the Finnish immigrant was extraordinary; see Ralph J. Jalkanen, *The Finns in North America*. (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1969), pp. 66-67, 185, 203, 205-206.

17. T. A. Larson, *History of Wyoming*. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1965), pp. 141-144; Carl S. Gustafson, "History of Vigilante and Mob Activity in Wyoming (University of Wyoming Master's Thesis, 1961), pp. 122-123; Mrs. J. H. Goodnough, "David G. Thomas' Memories of the Chinese Riot," *Annals of Wyoming*, July, 1947, pp. 105-111; Stone, *Uinta County*, *op. cit.*, pp. 117-118; reference to the Japanese miner in Wyoming may be found in Yamato Ichihashi, *Japanese in the United States* (New York: Arno Press and *The New York Times*, 1969; 1932), p. 144.

18. *Kemmerer Camera*, 6-28-02, p. 1; 5-17-02, p. 1.

families seldom received cash at the end of the month. Penney might have finally persuaded the local bankers to give him the loan, but he borrowed at his home town bank in Missouri instead, and he soon succeeded in founding his "mother-store" in Kemmerer, and additional outlets in Rock Springs and Cumberland. This was the beginning of what was to become the familiar J. C. Penney Company, one of the largest and most successful retail chains in the country.¹⁹

Kemmerer's numerous saloons were, in a sense, social institutions. They not only served as a gathering place for men seeking relaxation, but the owners, some of whom were the more prominent men in the community, made their buildings and facilities available for public gatherings. The first organizational meeting of the United Mine Workers of America was held in a Kemmerer saloon by candlelight. When the lights went out soon after the meeting started, some of the men assumed that the Frontier Supply Company was responsible for the sudden power shortage.

There were four lodges in Kemmerer by the fall of 1901, and Diamondville had four fraternal organizations, but none were established at Frontier. Kemmerer men organized the Improved Order of Red Men, the Odd Fellows, the Triangle Camp of the Woodmen of the World, and the Eagles, but some people "deplored" the movement to organize a Masonic lodge in Kemmerer. Some religionists said that the "free masons were not nice people." Nevertheless, the editor of the *Camera* said that a Masonic lodge would be established in spite of the opposition if six men would join with him. Later, when a Kemmerer man who was a Mason died suddenly, an emergency lodge was opened in Casey's Opera House for the fraternal services that were held before the funeral conducted in the Methodist-Episcopal Church. This incident served to unite the local Masons who later organized a lodge in Kemmerer.²⁰

The managerial foresight of a coal man, speculative instinct, and the cupidity, so characteristic of the 19th century American entrepreneur-magnate, built the town of Kemmerer. Patrick J. Quealy and Mahlon S. Kemmerer were the founding fathers, yet they did not claim credit for every accomplishment. Quealy and his Pennsylvania partner did not intend that it should be their

19. Norman Beasley, *Main Street Merchant: The Story of the J. C. Penney Company*. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1948), pp. 26-47; J. P. Henry, *Kemmerer Book of Old Timers*. (Southwest Wyoming Museum, 1940), pp. 18, 24; *Kemmerer Camera*, 5-10-02, p. 1, 5-17-02, p. 1, 5-24-02, p. 1.

20. Erma Fletcher, "A History of the Labor Movement in Wyoming, 1870-1940," (University of Wyoming Master's Thesis, 1945), p. 29; interview: G. Barrett with Michel Lambermont, Kemmerer, 12-26-71; *Kemmerer Camera* 11-13-01, p. 1, 12-14-01, p. 1.

town, and the men and women who settled there soon demonstrated that it was not. While Quealy was the patron of Frontier, Kemmerer's leaders accepted him as a partner. Some people were filled with awe in his presence, and others found reason to resent him, but the populace, as a whole, paid Quealy, Mahlon and John Kemmerer about the same sort of respect that bankers or business leaders received in most small towns. He was "Kemmerer's most distinguished citizen," lawyer Robert Rose recalled after his first visit with Quealy. There was "something about him that . . . made you feel that here was a man very different from most men, a man who ruled the minds and the wills of others and would continue to do so as long as he lived." Rose was a perceptive man, and his initial evaluation was correct if he was referring to Quealy's relationship with his subordinates at Frontier, but Quealy did not rule the town council or Kemmerer's business community.

Political leadership, and the administration of the town's internal affairs was provided by the saloonkeepers, doctors, lawyers, merchants and contractors, for the most part. Quealy, a leading Democrat on the state, and eventually the regional level, was not a candidate for a single office in the town, county or the state. The Democratic party did not reign supreme in Kemmerer even though some of the leading citizens expressed their preference for that party. Political life, like that of many small towns, did not suffer from the bossism of the large city; minds and votes were not ruled by the most illustrious people. Factionalism in the form of political parties contributed to lively campaigns during which the problems of the community were articulated by the candidates.

The town, unlike the camp, belonged to the people. Quealy, who directed the townsite survey, sold the land, and shared the profits with the Kemmerers and the Short Line, was satisfied that this was the case. Yet he indulged himself, privately, with the illusions of an empire builder, occasionally. Reporting that the town was building in "great shape," Quealy urged John Kemmerer to make a trip to Wyoming with his father as soon as possible. "I am satisfied," he said, "that you would greatly enjoy a month's visit with me, and that as you walked over the miles of territory which we control and observe the improvements that you would say we have been the monarchs and are now, of all we survey. The story told briefly is this; we come as near having a monopoly of all that is good in our territory as any corporation I know of." When the Kemmerers walked out on the hillside with Quealy, they viewed in one great panorama the tipple of the coal mine, the store and tenements at Frontier, and the new town on the flat above Ham's Fork River. In 1900 Quealy located his family in the remodeled building that had been Kemmerer's first school, and this house remained Quealy's home until his death in November, 1930.

The Kansas editor, William Allen White, said that the thriving

country trade centers of the West were the "social safety-valves" which carried forward into the twentieth century the energy which realized the vision of the nineteenth century pioneers. Neighborliness and brotherly love could still be found in the small town, White believed, while writing in the 1930s. Robert Rose found this to be true when he arrived in Kemmerer in 1914. "I was to learn," he said following weeks of discouragement, "that the rugged men who tend cattle and sheep in Wyoming's hills and plains, till the fields, build their homes along its streams, and in its mountain valleys . . . dig coal from its depths, drill oil wells a mile deep, and provide food and fuel for hundreds of thousands, do all of this because they had the courage to brave hardships and the vision to see the rewards that courage and industry bring out here in this last frontier of America."²¹

21. Robert Rose, Sr., "Manuscript" (1949), pp. 13, 44-45, copy located in the office of Patrick J. Quealy, Kemmerer; P. J. Quealy to John L. Kemmerer, Salt Lake City, 1-25-98; *Kemmerer Camera*, 7-14-00, p. 1, 8-18-00, p. 4; White, *Changing West*, *op. cit.*, pp. 82-83.

Thomas Fitzpatrick Indian Agent Upper Platte & Arkansas to
Thomas H. Harvey esqr Supert Indian affairs Saint Louis, Mo.
Dated Bents Fort Arkansas River Oct 19th 1847

It is a remarkable fact, that the most ignorant and weakminded are those who most readily acquire a knowledge of the Indian tongue orrally. From this cause, it is a very difficult matter to arrive at anything like correctness; and to it may be attributed the many falsehoods, and exagerations put forth to the world, by travellors and others who obtained their information from men who had neither a proper knowledge of their own mother tongue, or that of the Indian and in nine cases out of ten, does not, nor cannot, comprehend what the bookmaker, or traveller wishes to arrive at, because they are subjects that never before entered his mind. Those remarks will apply equally to all the writing I have ever read on the subject; at least so far as my own opinion goes.

Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Selected
Documents Concerning the Administration of Indian
Affairs at the Upper Platte Agency. Record Group 75.

H W Wharton, Capt 6th Infy, Commanding to Commissioner
Indian Affairs. Dated Fort Kearny N.T., Dec. 16, 1855.

There are twenty nine Sioux Indians Prisoners here (women and children) taken at the battle near Ash hollow in September last, they were perfectly destitute of clothing of any description, entirely without robes or Blankets — their necessities in this respect have been administered to by a subscription from the officers of the post yet they still suffer much for the want of Blankets. I wrote to Mr. Twiss Ind agent at Laramie sometime since, stating the destitution of their situation and requesting him to furnish me some blankets for them to which communication I received no reply — the winter has already been very severe I have built a comfortable sod building for them and done all that was in my power to alleviate their condition yet they suffer much for want of their accustomed winter clothing. I therefore respectfully request that I may be permitted to purchase a supply of Blanket s for them for the Sutler at this post — Your early reply to this will much oblige me.

Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Selected
Documents Concerning the Administration of Indian
Affairs at the Upper Platte Agency. Record Group 75.

Hugh Kirkendall's Wagon Train on the Bozeman Trail, 1866: Letters of C. M. S. Millard

Edited by Lonnie J. White

The Bozeman Trail, known also as the Montana Trail and the Powder River Road, was blazed in 1863 by John M. Bozeman in response to the need for a short, direct route from the east to the recently discovered gold fields of Montana. Until that time only two routes—both long and circuitous—led into the region; one involved ascending the Missouri River to Fort Benton while the other required traveling the Oregon Trail as far as Fort Hall. The new route began at Fort Laramie on the Oregon Trail and skirted the eastern base of the Big Horn Mountains. Because it abounded in wood, water, and game, the Bozeman Trail might have been a complete success. The difficulty with the road, however, was with the Sioux and Cheyenne Indians, who regarded the traffic through the Powder River country as a threat to one of their finest hunting grounds and sought to prevent it by attacking wagon trains wherever they found them.

In 1865 an expedition under Brigadier General Patrick E. Connor sought unsuccessfully to clear the route of hostiles. It was Connor who established Fort Connor, the first military post on the road. Unable to conquer the Indians, the government turned to treaty making. In the autumn of 1865 government representatives negotiated a treaty with leaders of several Northern Plains tribes in which the Indians promised safe passage for whites through the Powder River country. As it turned out, the treaty settled nothing because the signatories posed no real threat to the Bozeman Trail. Consequently, in the summer of 1866 another peace commission convened and negotiated the Fort Laramie treaty with other, more recalcitrant chiefs.

Among those who did not sign the Fort Laramie treaty, however, was Red Cloud, a principal Sioux chief, who left the council upon the appearance of a large military expedition under Colonel Henry B. Carrington. Carrington's orders called for him to occupy the Bozeman Trail and open it to safe travel. Carrington replaced Fort Connor with Fort Reno on June 28 and, further up the road, established Fort Phil Kearny on July 13 and Fort C. F. Smith on August 12.

Despite Red Cloud's leaving the Fort Laramie conference in

protest of Carrington's mission, government officials at Fort Laramie apparently assured emigrants that the Bozeman Trail was safe. But such was not the case as both troops and travelers on the road soon found out. Numerous attacks were made against wagon trains, and the soldiers at the new posts were scarcely able to defend themselves much less the passing traffic. Many skirmishes and battles were fought, and several of them—the Fetterman Massacre of December, 1866, the Wagon Box Fight of August, 1867, and others—are still being fought and refought on paper by western historians today. Not until the troops were removed and the road was closed by the Treaty of Fort Laramie in 1868 did the action subside. And it was not until 1878, after other posts had been established in the Powder River country and the Sioux had been defeated in the Sioux War of 1876, that the trail was restored to full use.¹

It is with the journey of a single wagon train over the Bozeman Trail in 1866 that this article is concerned. The train was organized at Leavenworth, Kansas, by Hugh Kirkendall whose purpose was to haul merchandise to Helena, Montana, for sale to the miners. The route of Kirkendall's train was over the Platte Road in Nebraska, which formed part of the Oregon Trail, and the Bozeman Trail in Dakota Territory (present Wyoming) and Montana. The journey over the Bozeman Trail was made following the negotiations with the Indians at Fort Laramie in 1866 and while Carrington was about establishing and building the military posts mentioned above. The story of the trip is told by an adventurer with Kirkendall's train named C. M. S. Millard. As correspondent of the Kansas *Leavenworth Daily Times*, Millard wrote five letters, four en route and one at the end of the trail, of which four have been found.² These four letters are reproduced below.

Although the journey of the train has been noticed in other works, the details of its movements have not been known. Millard's letters provide an especially good account of the march over

1. Dorothy M. Johnson, *The Bloody Bozeman: The Perilous Trail to Montana's Gold* (New York: McGraw Hill Book Co., 1971); Burton S. Hill, "Bozeman and the Bozeman Trail," *Annals of Wyoming*, October, 1964, pp. 205-233; James C. Olson, *Red Cloud and the Sioux Problem* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1965), pp. 3-113; Cyrus Townsend Brady, *Indian Fights and Fighters* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1971), pp. 3-71; Robert A. Murray, *Military Posts in the Powder River Country of Wyoming, 1865-1894* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1968), pp. 3-12.

2. The letters were published in the *Leavenworth Daily Times* during June, August, September, and October, 1866. The missing letter, which Millard says he wrote from Julesburg, Colorado, either was not published or appeared in a missing issue. A file of the newspaper is in the collections of the Kansas State Historical Society at Topeka.

the Bozeman Trail. Millard discusses routine difficulties, tells about desperate encounters with the Indians, criticizes Colonel Carrington as an incompetent and cowardly commander, and refers to many men with whom he or the train came in contact on the trail. Relatively full and readable, the letters provide interesting reading and should add to the knowledge of both lay and professional historians concerned with the history of the famous Bozeman Trail.³

Near Grasshopper Creek, K[ansa]s
May 30th, 1866

Editor, *Times*: In company with Hugh Kirkendall's train, your correspondent, with two *companeros*, struck his tent at Salt Creek Valley on the morning of the 25th inst., and through rains and fearfully bad roads gained this point, where we lie in wait for some three or four wagons left behind at Salt Creek for coffee, which was to arrive from New York.

The mud and slush at some points in ravines and bayous, between here and Leavenworth, are enough to call forth the "heftiest" imprecations of a saint, let alone the weaker minds of poor mortals; but our chief and his assistants (Kirkendall, McGee,⁴ Anthony, McCarthy and Charlie Miller) were equal to the tasks imposed, and with a whoop and hurrah and doubling of teams, gained everything attempted, and proved that Leavenworth has this year not only sent out the finest outfit, but the best men that have left the Atlantic States for the Pacific for a number of years, and I doubt if ever before. Leavenworth certainly bears the palm, and worthily too, and Kirkendall and assistants are certainly the best engineers of the "plains across" that I have ever seen.

George McGee is expected up this afternoon with the wagons which we left behind, and at break of day in the morning we are off again for Montana.

Hugh Kirkendall is in your city, whence he went yesterday, but will overtake his train at or near [Fort] Kearney and make the

3. The letters have been reproduced with only minor alterations and minimum editorial comment. Some unnecessary punctuation has been eliminated and words, including the names of persons and places, which have been either misspelled by the writer or misprinted by the newspaper have been corrected in the interest of readability and accuracy. Insertions have been enclosed in brackets.

4. In subsequent letters, Millard spells this name "Magee."

5. The overland route from Leavenworth connected with the Platte Road at Fort Kearny, often spelled Fort Kearney, Nebraska.

through trip.⁵ Charley Miller and Anthony are in Atchison to-day perfecting some arrangement for the better comfort and condition of the outfit and those engaged.

Yesterday and to-day are the only pleasant ones we have had, and from the bleak winds and cold rains, we gladly accept the change, and with all nature praise the Power that gives us sunshine instead. A few more days of such weather as this and the crops which seem so backward in the country passed will give promise of an abundant yield, and farmers will loosen their purse strings more readily to city merchants and traders, feeling a certainty of a full return this fall, a devoutly wished consummation to be, *or else*.

Speaking of confinement, foul air, and the like in our cities, why don't more of the poor consumptives and overtaxed business and working men, take a trip on the prairie for their general health, and avoid the expense of a doctor's bill, and the nauseous effects of medicines, and when it is had so much cheaper? Why don't you public slaves—you "crusher" writers and printers—let yourselves loose once in a while and enjoy the free, pure air of Heaven, and the glorious sunshine, and appreciate nature as seen in its nakedness? But a week or two of such a life and the doctors would all starve to death, and undertakers go abegging. Look at us, J. Hare, Esq., and myself, we have only been out a week, and are growing double breasted and in fearful proportions, and at this rate of improvement will soon have to get Charley Miller to weld an iron band or something else to keep us in our clothes. Hare's second row of teeth have started already, which improves mastication somewhat, as he was only able to eat a pound or two of ham and drink five pints of coffee this morning, with a similar quantity of bread and potatoes; but Kirkendall will make on this, as the commissary will have only to issue half rations to our friend Hare until he regains his appetite.

Among the gentlemanly conductors of the train, is the ex-Marshall of Leavenworth City, Charlie Miller,⁶ to whom the qualities of a well-bred gentlemen belong as first nature; being cautious, kind, and with a varied experience, he has won the confidence and respect of every one and is everywhere and among all men greeted with a smile. To wish such a man success and fortune is like wishing the same for one's self, and while your city looses [*sic*] we gain his society, and are pleased thereat. Encomiums are due all the named gentlemen likewise.

This morning we varied the regular routine of our daily life with a hunt on the prairie, which resulted in obtaining six snipes and three chickens, which will be served up in our mess this evening,

6. Presumably "Charley" Miller and "Charlie" Miller were one and the same person.

and in a style that would contemplate the palate of any Leavenworth epicure, notwithstanding the many inconveniences under which we labor and the absence of celery, mint and the like.

Unlike ships at sea, river steamers, and everything else in this world are the prairie schooners, for the former are able to extend the courtesies in the matters of newspapers, and by this means all the news up to the date of paper obtained is read and digested. But we have received no morning papers for sometime, the carrier hasn't come around, and on the affairs of State we are sadly "disposted;" don't know where the Fenians made their second strike, and if so how much, or whether by the O'Mahoney's, or O'Stephens; whether Killian took Campo Bello away with him or not, or if Roberts stills enjoys his \$10 dinners at Taylor's or Delmonico's, or has taken to a free lunch route; and the question recurs, "does Maximilian continue the evacuation of the Halls of Montezuma, or re-leased the premises for another term;" question follows question as one fellow to the other, and we wonder if the Reconstruction committee will enjoy good health or whether the President has vetoed them; how do the M.D.'s enjoy the Asiatic cholera, and if there is any truth to the statement that Tom Thumb and wife have no baby.⁷ But J. Hare I believe is fully posted in the latest news.

We arrived at Marysville [Kansas] 4th June; the incidents, etc., on the way, reserved for the next letter.

Millard

New Fort Reno [Fort Phil Kearny],⁸ D[akota] T[erritory]
July 26th, 1866

Dear *Times*: Since my letter from Julesburg, N. T.,⁹ at the crossing of the Platte, things have changed most wonderfully, and from a peaceable citizen train we have become Indian fighters in

7. Millard obviously refers to national and local news items of contemporary interest.

8. It will become clear below that New Fort Reno was actually Fort Phil Kearny. The status of Fort Reno down the trail was uncertain in the beginning and Colonel Carrington himself officially referred to the new post up the trail as Fort Reno. But it was decided to retain the original Fort Reno and to name the new post in honor of General Philip Kearny of Civil War fame. On July 27, one day after Millard's letter was written, Carrington proclaimed the new post Fort Philip Kearny. Because the general was better known to veterans as "Phil" Kearny the post in popular usage was known as Fort Phil Kearny. Dee Brown, *Fort Phil Kearny: An American Saga* (New York: Putnam, 1962), pp. 91-92; Robert W. Frazer, *Forts of the West*. (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1965), pp. 183-184.

9. This is the letter referred to in the introduction as not having been found. Julesburg was across the Nebraska territorial line in Colorado. A

the fullest acceptance of the term, and find ourselves equal to the task, though forced it may be.

Rumors of peace and quiet with the savages had reached us long before we made Fort Laramie, and we had supposed that our Commissioners had really "did all things well," and that the new road (Bridger's) to Montana was perfectly safe, but to our cost it has proven the opposite, and we find ourselves forced to contest every inch of ground over the new road and may consider ourselves in good luck if we get through the long and tedious passage at all.¹⁰

Kirkendall's train arrived at Old Fort Reno¹¹ without accident, except those incident to such a trip, in company with two ox trains—about ninety wagons in all and one hundred and ten men—and went into camp on the eastern side of Powder River, where we learned that a few days previous a herd of cattle had been attacked and the herders driven off. The herd belonged to Sutler [A. S.] Leighton at the Fort. Leighton lost some thirty or forty head of mules, which our soldiers at the Fort were unable to retake. That night was a sleepless one to us, from the fact that early in the night fall the Sioux came upon us, attempting a stampede of stock of both trains, throwing arrows in great number into both herds and but for the quick action of our wagon masters and men we would have been left without a hoof of stock.

Sunday, the 22nd inst., we pulled out from the Fort to make a ten mile drive, and thus divide the distance between the Fort and Crazy Woman's Fork. The camp was no sooner made than the bloody Sioux began to show themselves on the surrounding hills, and a party of four coming rather too close, Hugh Kirkendall, with a trusty Spencer, made a dash for them and bothered their game

map in Grace Raymond Hebard and E. A. Brininstool, *The Bozeman Trail*. Vol. II, (Cleveland: The Arthur H. Clark Co., 1922), shows the trail as beginning at Fort Sedgwick near Julesburg and running thence to Fort Laramie. Fort Laramie, however, apparently was the original starting point.

10. It may appear to the reader at first glance that Millard has reference to the old Bridger Trail, a road running west of the Big Horns, which Jim Bridger, the old mountain man and guide, had cut in 1864. The Kirkendall train, however, was unquestionably on the Bozeman Trail. One might also infer that Millard considered the Bozeman Trail as "a new road" because it had recently been opened for travel by the Carrington expedition. But in view of a subsequent mention of "the old or new road" in clear reference to the trail, Millard undoubtedly meant by "a new road" a variation of the old road pioneered by the Carrington expedition. It was "Bridger's" road because Bridger as Carrington's chief guide had cut it. J. Cecil Alter, *Jim Bridger*. (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1962), pp. 320-322; Hebard and Brininstool, *op. cit.*, pp. 113-121; W. Turrentine Jackson, *Wagon Roads West*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1952), p. 284.

11. The original Fort Reno. See Note 8 above.

considerably, which had the effect to keep them off till a better opportunity was presented, which happened the following day, and crowned some of our men with the wreath of victory, and gave the novelist a fit subject for romance—aye, enough for a dozen *noble red men*" novels.¹²

We nooned at Crazy Woman's Fork, and concluded to remain till the following morning in company with a Government train.¹³ The night passed in peace and quiet. We were too much for them. They hadn't the sand; couldn't find enough in the country, though nothing but sandhills are to be seen. Our boys have got it all and they know it.

Tuesday, the 24th, a long drive had to be made to Clear Creek, the Government train and oxen in the lead, from which we became separated owing to several little accidents which had befallen us. The best signs of an attack imaginable had been seen by us all the morning, namely, having seen so many Indians since the day before. All had gone well till within six miles of Clear Creek, a bad canon had been passed and we had gained the summit of a flat top hill when a few of our mules gave out and we made a dry corral; but no sooner had the mules been turned loose and our men gone in a ravine below to dig for water than the Sioux came down upon us with their "zip, zip, zip," right among the herd and twenty feet from the corral. Twenty odd in number made the charge, and with their medicine ponies had attempted the stampede. Over the heads of Kirkendall, Jeff Anthony and the boys who were digging for water, they came, arrows flying, screams, shrieks and yells; but a front was presented which they little dreamt of, and their ponies tumbled from well directed shots, and a few of them went to their long hunting grounds. The hills grew black with Indians; from every canon and ravine they came, all is consternation and excitement. It is remembered that George Magee, one of our wagon masters, is on ahead, several miles away, and it is feared he will fall victim at their hands. Our position is indeed critical, and a junction must be formed with the trains ahead or we are lost. Thus we remained until all the corral gaps were closed and all ready for the worst. Still the necessity is greater for a

12. For other accounts of action on the road between Fort Reno and Fort Phil Kearny at about the same time, notably that involving military trains under Lieutenant Alexander H. Wands and Captain Thomas B. Burrowes, see Brown, *op. cit.*, pp. 82-83; Alter, *op. cit.*, pp. 323-324; Johnson, *op. cit.*, pp. 208-209; Hebard and Brininstool, *op. cit.*, pp. 89-92. One notices some disagreement in these narratives as they relate to dates and details.

13. If Johnson's account of the movements of the Burrowes and Wands military trains is accurate, the government train mentioned here was the Burrowes and Wands trains traveling together from Fort Reno to Fort Phil Kearny; Johnson, *op. cit.*, p. 208.

junction, and we must combine. Hugh Kirkendall offers \$500 to the man or men who will run the gauntlet, and the best animal in the outfit; if no one accepts he will go himself. Just at this moment several horsemen are seen rounding the summit of the hills to the front and on the road; the red Americans charge them again and again. Kirkendall calls for volunteers to the rescue, but it is afterwards thought a decoy of the enemy to divide our force, and no one goes.

The little band of six, as was afterwards proven, consisting of George Magee, Thos. Dillon, Martin Donovan, Robert Anderson, Goodchild, and Longworthy, gained a little mound about the center of operations and made a stand, fighting some 50 or 60 Indians. Saddles are taken from their horses to form breastworks, behind which they lie down and fight. The Indians charge by dozens in circle and double circles, fire from the hilltops, ravines and canons, crawl upon their stomachs, deliver their fire and retreat. Mr. Dillon receives a ball in the side and is down and helpless, and for four long hours they fight against ten to one. We watch the whole engagement, but think it all a sham of the enemy, until at last two are seen carrying a form, while the balance are walking backwards and delivering their fire. The horses of Magee and others come dashing up the road at this moment, and we then know for the first time that they are our friends and quickly are we to the rescue; saved they are all, but Dillon is dying. Preparations are immediately made for a drive to the other trains, and we are ready to fight every foot of the way. Seeing our preparations the Indians withdraw, and we are left undisputed possession of the road. Soon the battle ground is made, and we find two dead ponies, one mule, and several relics of the strife. One or two Indians were killed to a certainty and five wounded. During the night time, couriers were sent to the Fort [Phil Kearny], and an escort sent us, which enabled us to arrive here without further trouble. Dillon died in a few hours and was buried last evening at this place.¹⁴

Our friend Jeff Anthony, who is a jovial rollicking fellow, a general favorite, and somewhat of a wag, was insulted by one of the Indians, who jumped his pony over his head while in the ravine, and Jeff says if he ever meets said Indian in the States, he'll demand satisfaction. Believe he will do it if we don't all get our hair raised before we get through. Prospects tend that way, but we are a fighting community and will probably have an escort from this post. The Indians are on the warpath from this point

14. It was Dillon who sent a message to Captain Burrowes at Clear Creek that the Kirkendall train was under attack. Burrowes sent couriers to Fort Phil Kearny and a small escort was dispatched to Kirkendall's assistance; *ibid.*, p. 209; Brown, *op. cit.*, p. 82.

up, and swear we *shall not* travel this new road, and it looks as though they mean business, for they have four days ago captured and massacred French Pete and his party but three miles from the Fort, and but three days ago come down on the garrison here and drove off eighty head of stock.¹⁵

In my next letter I intend to show up the officers and commands at Laramie and points this way. Government must do something and that quickly, or forever cease to be a protection to his subjects. What a pity we cannot have men where they are needed, and not *women*. But more of this hereafter.

And now a little advice. Let no freighters or emigrants attempt the passage of this new road without being at least an hundred strong and *very well* armed, and let no Indian at no point on the old or new road come into their camps, and if they do, see that they never *get out* of camp.¹⁶ This is talk, and well meant, and if not followed strictly, the cost will fall upon those who will not be advised. That treaties have been made with the Indians this year is a LIE, black and damnable too,¹⁷ but that some \$70,000 worth of goods and presents were given the squaws and papooses is a *truth*, if we are to believe our Commissioners. But let me divide the thing on the Commissioners and say some \$5,000 or \$10,000 worth of stuff was given them, the balance of which they retained, and quickly made good their escape to the States. Who would not be a Commissioner?¹⁸ More anon.

Your correspondent,
C. M. Millard

Big Horn River, Montana
Aug. 11

A recital of times and trials by the wayside was given you by

15. According to Brown, *op. cit.*, pp. 77-79, the Indians stampeded 175 animals at the post on July 17 and subsequently fell on Louis (French Pete) Gazzous' temporary trading camp nearby and massacred six men including French Pete himself.

16. This advice to prospective travelers on the trail not to allow Indians into their camps was no doubt predicated on the fact that in two recent instances the Indians had allegedly shot several trainmen in the back after expressing friendship and accepting gifts of tobacco; Brown, *op. cit.*, p. 93.

17. Millard was, of course, incorrect in asserting that no treaties had been made. It doubtless appeared to him, however, that none had been made since the non-signatory Indians were on the warpath.

18. Millard's intimation that the peace commissioners at Fort Laramie were motivated in their efforts at treaty making by personal profit is unsubstantiated. His cynical attitude was no doubt typical of travelers on the trail who, after receiving assurances at Fort Laramie that the road was safe, subsequently encountered hostile Indians on it.

your correspondent for the last time at New Fort Reno (since, I understand, to be called Fort Phil Kearny), since which time we have made this place and lie in wait for the waters to recede, or for the stretching of Mr. James Bridger's rope ferry,—the said gentleman being now present, having traveled in company with a force of soldiers, who will build and occupy a fort [C. F. Smith] on this river and who acted as an escort from Phil Kearny for Mr. Kirkendall, with whom Mr. Bridger will travel to Virginia City, as a guide over an entirely new road, Mr. Hank Williams, the latter gentleman's friend and companion accompanying.¹⁹

In my last it became a most painful duty to record the death of Mr. Dillon, who fell battling the savage, and now a still more distressing affair is recorded, which will fill the hearts of many readers of the *Times*, as it has done this day the adventurers of the prairies, in whose bosoms beat hearts as true and warm and steadfast as the mothers who bore them, with sorrow.

To-day Messrs. Kirkendall, Waller and Magee were searching for a shallow place in the river, which would afford a crossing for the trains, unwilling to lay in wait for the stretching of the rope ferry, about to be established by Mr. Bridger; and after having tried several places, and found too great a depth of water in each instance, were about to abandon the search, when it was agreed one more trial should be made. The trial was made and the whole party swamped, becoming entangled in an eddy, when it was found that they must dismount, as the horses could not bear up and were being rapidly taken downward. Messrs. Kirkendall and Waller reached the shore safely, but to their horror saw their friend and companion still struggling in the rapids and far away. Immediately disrobing they prepared for a rescue, but too late, as at that moment poor Magee disappeared to appear no more. Search was immediately instituted, and in three or four hours time the body of Mr. Magee was taken from the depths.

To-morrow he will be interred by his many friends on an elevated plot of ground overlooking the river and commanding the country for miles around—a most beautiful resting place. Mr. Jno. O'Niel has prepared a most serviceable, and at the same time a very tasty coffin, being lined and trimmed inside and out with

19. After a layover at Fort Phil Kearny the Kirkendall train journeyed northward with the command under Captain Nathaniel C. Kinney which established Fort C. F. Smith on the Big Horn River on August 12. Bridger's instructions from Carrington at Fort Phil Kearny called for him to examine "the whole line hence to Virginia City" for the purposes of determining its condition and shortening it by "proper cut-offs" and to gather information from the Crow Indians to the north. Alter, *op. cit.*, pp. 324-327. The route of the Kirkendall train was across the Yellowstone to Bozeman in the Gallatin Valley and along the Missouri to Helena, Montana. *Leavenworth Daily Times*, October 14, 1866.

white and black woolen blankets—all the country can afford; and on the lid of which is a Masonic emblem and the name "George W. Magee."²⁰

On the opposite side of the river are eleven wagons corralled and stockaded, where they have been for three weeks, patiently awaiting a promised rescue from friends gone before. Some *friendly* Arapahoes came down on them about a month ago, when they had just made the other shore on their way to Virginia City, killed several men and borrowed about 90 head of stock—every hoof they were possessed of. The Indians have not yet returned them. It is presumed they will not.

Four scouts came in from Reno (Fort Phil Kearny) last evening and reported that the Sioux and Cheyennes had attacked the fort and carried away all the stock and that great consternation existed therein.²¹ Pity that they had not taken and scalped Col. Carrington, commandant at that post, for a more perfect booby, coward and imbecile never existed, if all reports are true, and certainly his whole command are not liars; unless, indeed, we except the Commissioner [E. B.] Taylor, who is at Laramie, and the commander at Julesburg [Fort Sedgwick].²² These shoulder strapped guardians of the people are to be shown in their true colors. A paper is now being signed by all the immigrants traveling this road, the purpose of which is antagonistic to their interests, and if not recog-

20. Kirkendall's efforts to cross the Big Horn, which resulted in Magee's death, is also described in Johnson, *op. cit.*, p. 214. Johnson misspells Magee's name as "McGear."

21. Although the Indians during August assaulted wood trains engaged in hauling timber to Fort Phil Kearny from nearby Piney Island and the fort's herds were indeed raided in September, it would appear that no such raid in early August as described here actually occurred. See Brown, *op. cit.*, pp. 96-128.

22. Charlie Miller, one of Millard's companions, mentioned above, shared Millard's views regarding Carrington and others engaged in peace-making and protecting the trail. In a statement made upon his return to Kansas from Montana, Miller declared: "Everyone who has passed over the Powder River Route is convinced that the Laramie Peace Commissioners, and Colonels Maynadier and Carrington, are to blame for the loss of life, property and sufferings of those who have traveled the road. Almost every train that went by that route would have gone by way of Salt Lake, had not the men been assured by the Government officials at Laramie that the Powder River Route was perfectly safe, and that Col. Carrington was on the road with a force sufficient to protect all emigrants." "Col. Carrington," Miller further alleged, "can scarcely protect himself, much less the lives of travelers. Indeed it is said that Mrs. Carrington is commander of the post. A story is told, and vouched for, that upon starting to go out with a company to bury five men murdered by the Indians, his wife threatened to pack up and go back to the States, unless he returned to his quarters. Of course 'Henry' couldn't stand the tender appeal, and quietly encased himself in a place perfectly safe from the 'friendly' Indians." *Leavenworth Daily Times*, October 14, 1866.

nized at Washington, then it is supposed some of the gentry will swing on the nearest tree should the road be traveled again by the parties now on it, provided the above named imbeciles can be enticed for a moment from headquarters without a regiment at their heels and several batteries of artillery.

These scouts report 256 wagons coming up, among whom is your fellow citizen Phillips. The smaller parties have had to fight the Sioux and Cheyennes all the way from Laramie, losing 22 men and many head of stock. These twenty-two men, with our losses and the massacre of French Pete's party, foot up to 39 murders by the infernal redskins, and yet Col. [Henry E.] Maynadier, commander of the District of the Platte,²³ issued an order that any immigrants or freighters who were proved guilty of shooting one of the *noble* red men of the prairie should be immediately taken and turned over to the Indians, who would very "mercifully" (in consideration that it was the first offense) burn them at the stake. This Col. Maynadier is an apostate of the whites and of the Government; and is only at the height of his glory when revelling in the dusky arms of the Indians concubines, who are fed and kept by him at Laramie. I shall devote my next letter to these *gentlemen*, giving facts and figures which can be substantiated by living witnesses.

Our old friend, Charlie Miller, and Jeff Anthony, are alive and hearty, and muchly on the Indian fight and heavy on buffalo and antelope; and occasionally, if forced, will take a "bowl" with any man. Charlie expects to return to Leavenworth this fall or winter, if he does not like the country beyond.

C. M. S. Millard

Helena, Montana
Sept. 4, 1866

Dear *Times*: After 110 days on the prairies, your correspondent is at last enabled to indite from this place, and not with a saddened heart you are assured, was my arrival, for the Indians "bothered our game" considerably, and at times it looked as though our sweetness would be "wasted on the desert air" without a show of satisfaction.

But I am here, seated upon a robe and blanket, in a cabin which myself and Sir James [unidentified] jumped yesterday; my back braced against the rough unhewed logs, and writing upon the upturned end of my valise, a most faith-ful friend, indeed, since it

23. Maynadier was the commanding officer of Fort Laramie and a member of the peace treaty commission.

has followed me through California, Nevada, Mexico, Nicaragua, New Granada, and the whole States, and again "around the plains." Our cabin is eight by twelve, sits squarely and firmly under the foot of a hill, is covered with earth and carpeted with the same.

In one corner is our larder, and pretty well provisioned, too, since we have a half sack of flour, 20 lbs. potatoes, a piece of side meat, a few pounds of coffee and an empty whisky bottle, which was wont to wander to my lips as long as its contents "held out to burn," but now, alas, like my purse, is empty. This is all our cabin contains, except ourselves and camp kit, and a feeling of—but, softly, my robe has slipped from beneath me, and you know a man's breeches won't last forever, and the earth is very cold, and, no objections being urged, I will change my position as quickly as possible. But sentiment is spoiled, and so, *mon ami*, imagine a bust of eloquence forever lost to the world, of the Bailey kind.

Kirkendall is building a storehouse in which to place his goods until the market grows firmer. He will remain till next spring. A capital fellow he is, and I hope he may realize handsome profits from his venture.

Our mutual friend, Chas. H. Miller, has engaged passage on a Mackinaw and will quit here next Tuesday for Fort Benton, and thence down to the States by [the Missouri] river, purposing to arrive at Leavenworth in thirty five days.²⁴ I am, for one, sorry to see Charlie return, but [he] "hankers" after his old friends and associates, and so, I suppose, us "web feet" must lose him. (Note.—"Web-foot" means mountaineer, or old resident in the Territory, "tender-foot," new comer.) Charlie will be able to tell many adventurers and scapes, and hunting scenes, had on the trip which would take too much space, did I relate them, and to your tender mercies is he consigned. Jas. Hare will also return, probably in company with Charlie, but your correspondent will make his future here or see the balance of the globe, for you know we typos can travel whether on the bed rock or not.

We had another brush with "ye gentle savage" on the Yellowstone and were the victors; and occupied the land there abouts muchly. Rev. Mr. [William K.] Thomas and son [Charles] and a Canadian named [James] Schultz were killed the day before. Their rashness proved their death, for they left the day before against all entreaties. We came upon their mangled corpses a little too late, for the wolves during the night had played sad havoc, eating all the boy, except his head and shoulder—a hand and foot being found here and there.²⁵

24. Actually Miller returned to Leavenworth via Virginia City, Salt Lake City, and Denver. *Leavenworth Daily Times*, October 14, 1866.

25. According to Charlie Miller, "When near the Yellowstone, it was

And does not the dead of the prairie cry out against Laramie, Reno, Phil Kearny, and [C. F.] Smith and the Government? Why do not *men* command? Who sails the ship, who at the helm? Your correspondent knows of seventy-nine victims of the scalping knife during his trip, and an hundred captive women and slain bodies—and the story is not half told.²⁶ Vengeance is wanted. The Executive ax must fall.

Yours,
C. M. S. Millard

thought we were out of danger, and three wagons with the lightest loads struck out ahead. We were then in what is called Crow country. A band of Arrapahoes, however, had followed us, and, so soon as they discovered that the train had been divided, they attacked the weakest party and killed and scalped three." *Ibid.* See also Johnson, *op. cit.* pp. 211-212.

26. Casualties were indeed high on the Bozeman Trail in 1866, but Millard's reference to "an hundred captive women and slain bodies" is undoubtedly an exaggeration.

Friday: Roving Arapaho

By

EVADENE BURRIS SWANSON

A migratory Arapaho Indian known to his white friends as "Friday" moved about in the Rocky Mountains during almost his whole lifetime from 1821 to 1881. Only in the late '70s was he actually settled, on the Wind River Reservation. In his childhood he attended many of the fur traders' rendezvous in southern Wyoming with his friend and patron, Thomas Fitzpatrick. Fort Laramie was still a fur traders' post in those years.

When Friday reported his place of birth as "Rocky Mountains" on a government form in 1879, he was admitting that he did not know the exact site of that event.¹ He was at home in all the western mountains, however. The many references to him in nineteenth century historical records and publications supply an amazingly complete picture of his movements for fifty years of his life.

Friday's first appearance in history was near the Santa Fe trail on the Cimarron River in 1831 when Fitzpatrick found the small boy, possibly nine years old, lost from his tribe. Fitzpatrick named him, took him to St. Louis, and placed him in a Catholic school. The child learned English rapidly and his fluency in the language probably explains why many white explorers, soldiers, and travelers commented on him. Just how much of that year and how many more years the teachers in St. Louis had this little pupil is uncertain.

He was in the west in 1834 when William Marshall Anderson, traveling with a rendezvous caravan, was impressed with the precocious youngster. He wrote: "Mr. Fitzpatrick's little foundling, Friday, is becoming, every day, an object of greater & greater interest to me, his astonishing memory, his minute observations, & amusing inquiries interest me exceedingly."² Historian LeRoy Hafen believes Friday was at the rendezvous regularly between 1833 and 1836.³

1. Manuscript ledger, Shoshone Reservation Employment, 1879, p. 352, National Archives.

2. Dale Morgan, Eleanor Towles Harris, ed., *The Rocky Mountain Journals of William Marshall Anderson*. (San Marino, Calif.: Huntington Library, 1967), p. 222.

3. LeRoy R. Hafen, "Friday, the Arapaho," *The Mountain Men and the Fur Trade of the Far West*. (Glendale, Calif.: Arthur H. Clark Co., 1971), Vol. VIII, p. 187.

In 1843 when John Charles Fremont was traveling through northern Colorado with Fitzpatrick as his guide, the exploring party met Friday near Fort St. Vrain. He was then in his twenties and with a war party going to fight the Utes.⁴ Rufus Sage saw him in 1844 and praised his marksmanship: "Few Indians or whites can compete with Friday as a buffalo hunter. I have seen him kill five of these animals at a single chase." Sage tried to reconstruct Friday's rejoining his tribe and family, but his description of the reunion has the tone of nineteenth century fiction. Since Friday had been trained by a mountain man, it is doubtful that his adjustment to Indian life was as traumatic as Sage visualized.⁵

These travelers inquired about his background and noted various times for his life in school—five years, seven years, and they added embellishments like a love affair with a white girl, more difficult to believe than the record that he was fighting Utes and hunting buffalo.

In 1845 Col. S. W. Kearny and his dragoons guided by Fitzpatrick met Friday and some Arapahoes on Lodge Pole Creek in southeast Wyoming. The soldiers were surprised at the friendly exchange of greeting between Fitzpatrick and Friday.⁶

When Fitzpatrick was appointed the first agent of the Upper Platte Agency in 1846, one of his tasks was to negotiate a treaty.

His efforts culminated in the document signed at Fort Laramie in 1851. The terms affected Friday's life, for the Arapahoes and Cheyennes were assigned hunting grounds between the North Platte and the Arkansas, covering southern Wyoming and much of eastern Colorado. This area in the early '50s still abounded with game and gave some access to the river valleys of the South Platte. From the ten thousand or so Indians gathered about Fort Laramie for the treaty-making, Fitzpatrick selected eleven to go to Washington and meet President Millard Fillmore. Friday was included.

The Indian's journey cross-country was heralded in the contemporary newspapers. On their arrival in St. Louis, the report was that only one had seen a white settlement before.⁷ No official sources preserve details of the actual meeting with the president. Shannon Garst, a biographer of Fitzpatrick, has attempted to reconstruct the incident. Garst visualized the Indians sitting cross-legged on the floor proposing the smoking of a peace pipe and

4. Charles H. Carey, ed., *Journals of Theodore Talbot*. (Portland, Oregon: Metropolitan Press, 1931), p. 20.

5. Rufus B. Sage, *Scenes of the Rocky Mountains* (Philadelphia: Carey & Hart, 1846), p. 299.

6. Hafen, *op. cit.*, p. 11; Virginia Cole Trenholm, *The Arapahoes, Our People*. (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1970), p. 144.

7. *The National Intelligencer*, October, 1851, p. 3.

begging for gifts of horses. To this the author has President Fillmore reply that the iron horse would carry them to a steamboat.⁸

Fitzpatrick himself in his official report established an entirely contrasting mood for he observed the phenomenon now termed "culture shock." The anticipated beneficial results from the tour were not occurring, one member of the delegation had committed suicide, and "from the apparent depression of spirits prevailing among others of them, it would not surprise me in the least to see others commit the same act."⁹

Participating in the delegation gave Friday added prestige among the Arapahoes. Fitzpatrick died in 1854 and the new agent noted that "no one had been sent to Washington since 1851 but those still living who made the trip were listened to and words believed by young and old."¹⁰

Reports of military expeditions in the '50s contained more evidence of Friday's whereabouts. In 1857 he was seen by soldiers near Fort Bridger with Chief Black Bear and other Arapahoes. They were described as "tall, noble looking men well dressed in skins and buffalo robes." His presence around Golden, Colorado, was noted in 1858. There was reputedly a battle between Pawnees and Friday's Arapahoes near Laporte in that year. On September 18, 1859, he attended a council called by the agent at Deer Creek, Nebraska Territory. Explorers of the Yellowstone saw him on the Powder River and near present-day Glenrock in 1859.¹¹

During the next few years many disappointed miners from Pike's Peak and many freighters took up land claims along the tributaries of the South Platte and the reminiscences of these pioneers are filled with descriptions of their friendships with Friday, and their reliance on him. James B. Arthur was one who started a ranch on the Cache la Poudre and began cutting hay in the valley in 1860. Friday's band worked with the white settlers in defense against the Utes and the Arthur home was a kind of improvised fort where they assembled in case of alarm.

In July, 1862, the Utes raided the Sherwood ranch and stole horses. There was terror that they would strike again. The events which followed involved a series of mistaken identities. First, the Indian wives of the Laporte French Canadians picking berries in

8. Shannon Garst, *Broken-Hand Fitzpatrick, Greatest of Mountain Men*. (New York: Julian Messner, 1961), p. 177.

9. *Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs*, 1851, House Exec. Documents, 1st Sess. 32nd Cong. Vol. 636, p. 335.

10. Trenholm, *op. cit.*, pp. 144, 213.

11. "John Pulsipher Diary, 1857," LeRoy and Ann Hafen, *The Utah Expedition*. (Glendale: Arthur H. Clark Co., 1958) p. 199; Trenholm, *op. cit.*, pp. 146, 156; Ansel Watrous, *History of Larimer County* (Fort Collins: Fort Collins Courier Printing and Publishing Company, 1911), p. 84.



—Smithsonian Institution

CHIEF FRIDAY IN THE 1860s
A Rare Photo Showing Him in Indian Dress

the foothills were thought to be Utes. Then Friday and his Arapahoes who rushed out there caused a similar report. By the time all were recognized, the Utes and Sherwood's horses were long since gone. One of the Sherwood brothers acted as sub-agent to distribute provisions to the Arapahoes, so their ranch home, a building still standing south of Fort Collins, was a favorite haunt for Friday and his followers.¹² When the agent checked on the work with the Indians in 1864 he found them all hungry and little game in the permitted hunting area. "Mr. Sherwood, who under your direction, had made some distribution of provisions to them, I found confined to his bed, having been badly torn and mangled in an encounter with a grizzly bear in the mountains."¹³ The Sherwood ranch was also a stagecoach stop in the early '60s.

One of the reasons Lt. Col. William O. Collins chose Laporte for a subsidiary camp under Fort Laramie in 1863 was to patrol the dough boundary line between Utes and Arapahoes as well as to protect the stage line. The arrival of the soldiers on the Cache la Poudre meant that more people got acquainted with Friday, more men were hunting game, and there was less chance of his getting any land allotment in that area for his hungry Indians. The commander at Laporte in 1864 gave them permission to hunt on the south branch of the Poudre, a region where they had once roamed freely. The agent reported: "The expense of their subsistence is too large . . . they will be unable to go to the buffalo range, it being all occupied by hostile tribes." At one point the lives of Friday and the friendly band were in extreme danger. "One hundred armed men started out for the express purpose of cleaning out 'Friday' and his friends, but, fortunately, hearing of some hostile Indians being at Fort Lupton, they went in that direction."¹⁴ This was the same spirit among the whites that later the same year led to the Sand Creek Massacre.

Elizabeth Stone ran a boarding house for the officers in the new location at Fort Collins opened in October, 1864. Her niece came west and in her diary she described the pleasure the white ladies at the fort took in visiting Friday's camp in 1866: "His youngest squaw had a papoose that she was very proud to show. Its entire wardrobe was an antelope wrap, beaded beautifully with just blue and white beads." Even then the ladies were interested in collecting Indian art objects: "We could not get many of their Indian-made things, as they did not do much such work."¹⁵ Friday's

12. Watrous, *op. cit.*, p. 47.

13. *Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs*, 1864. (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1865), pp. 223, 236.

14. *Report of the Commissioner*, 1864, p. 237.

15. Elizabeth Keays Stratton, "My First Christmas in Fort Collins," *Fort Collins Evening Courier*, January 27, 1910, p. 4.

niece, Success-ca, who was quite a powerful figure in the band, had a lovely robe of fine antelope for state occasions and the ladies tried it on when they visited the camp. The photograph of Friday in beaded Indian apparel with pipe and bag and leaning against a table dates from this period.

The claims of the early settlers and the attraction which Fort Collins itself offered to civilians made it essential that the status of Friday's Arapahoes be clarified. The official government policy expressed in the treaty of Fort Wise in 1861 restricted the Arapahoes to a reservation in southeastern Colorado. This was a tremendous change from the large territory through which they roamed under the Fort Laramie treaty. Even the boundaries outlined in that agreement had not inhibited their movements as shown by the frequent meeting with expeditions in western Wyoming.

At first Friday rejected the Fort Wise settlement. Finally in June, 1863, Governor Evans sent word to Many Whips and Friday on the Cache la Poudre that rations would be withheld unless they submitted. Reluctantly, in the neighborhood of Fort Lyon in August, 1863, they signed an agreement to abide by the 1861 treaty.¹⁶ After that, Friday begged that a new reservation might be created on the north bank of the Cache la Poudre from the mouth of Box Elder to the Platte, ranging northward toward Crow Creek. The agent noted that this could not possibly be granted. The north bank in this desired section already had sixteen white families settled there and encompassed eighteen miles of the route of the Overland Stage.¹⁷

When the fort closed in 1867, the Indians were really destitute. The agent had counted 170 people under Friday in 1864. Three years later the number was under a hundred. In January, 1867, when Friday appealed for rations from Governor Cummings in Golden their plight was described:

Friday has been living with the remnant of his band on Cache la Poudre, near Fort Collins, and has been fed from that post until its discontinuance. As game is very scarce and wild this winter, he says he has no alternative than to apply for rations. He has now only thirty-seven left, men, women, and children. The governor gave them flour, meat and other necessities for present use and will issue more for use of those who remain behind.¹⁸

16. *Report of the Commissioner*, 1863. (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1864) pp. 124, 131, 136. The name of Fort Wise near Bent's Fort on the Arkansas River was changed to Fort Lyon in 1862. The site is near the modern city of La Junta, Colorado. Albert G. Boone, Daniel's grandson, was one of the negotiators of the Fort Wise treaty.

17. *Report of the Commissioner*, 1864, p. 235; Trenholm, *op. cit.*, p. 163.

18. *Report of the Commissioner*, 1864, p. 263; *The Colorado Transcript*, Golden, January 9, 1867, p. 4.

In August, 1867, Governor Hunt, Postmaster Sagendorf, and others were going north from Denver to talk to Friday's band at Laporte and see the new city of Cheyenne. In November, 1867, Friday was acting as interpreter at Fort Laramie.¹⁹

The pioneers were vague about Friday's last days around Fort Collins. They recalled his going with other Indians up the framework of the flour mill under construction in 1868 and being so dizzy he had to be help down. One recalled riding a horse in 1870 called "Old Swift Bird," bought from the Arapaho chief when he departed.²⁰

The establishment of the Wind River Reservation in 1868 for Chief Washakie and the Shoshones gave Friday new hope. This was the kind of terrain he liked, not southeastern Colorado. He appealed to Chief Washakie for space. Washakie remembered Friday as a friend of his youth but was in no hurry to acquire Arapaho neighbors. The Shoshones called the Arapahoes "dog eaters." The Wind River was the last Indian reservation made by treaty council. Later ones were created by executive order. Even though they were not wanted, Friday appeared in the area of Lander, Wyoming, in 1869. On one occasion that fall Captain Hermon Nickerson, the agent for the Indians, recognized Friday's riderless horse at Miners' Delight, a boom mining town near Lander. Nickerson went out looking for Friday and found him drunk by the roadside. He took him home and by this act won his confidence.²¹

The next spring when the Indians killed some whites, Captain Nickerson joined in a group to hunt them down. A daredevil miner named Bill Smith was in charge of seventy-five mounted men. Among them was Arthur H. Patterson, Fort Collins pioneer and old friend of Buffalo Bill Cody. Patterson wrote:

We expected to surprise the Arapaho camp, but they were on the lookout for us and we could not get them all. We did get 25 Indians and 14 ponies. We came near getting Old Friday and did kill four of his Indians. We also killed Black Bear. I expect you may know Friday as he used to live on the Cache la Poudre. I got one scalp and it is a fine one you bet. They fought some, but only one of our men was hurt and three horses wounded."²²

19. *Rocky Mountain News*, August 3, 1867, p. 4; Trenholm, *op. cit.*, p. 221.

20. Frank McClelland, "Henry Clay Peterson, Pioneer," *Fort Collins Express-Courier*, March 14, 1930, p. 2; *Express-Courier*, July 16, 1937, p. 4.

21. Trenholm, *op. cit.*, p. 232; Virginia Cole Trenholm, Maurine Carley, *The Shoshonis, Sentinels of the Rockies*. (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1964) p. 219; *Report of the Commissioner*, 1869 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1870), p. 274.

22. *Denver Times*, April 23, 1895, quotation from "Twenty-five Years Ago."

The agent who replaced Captain Nickerson described this incident in strong terms: "A body of thieves and cut-throats" marched to the vicinity of the post (Camp Augur) and fell upon and brutally murdered eleven unarmed men and women belonging to the Arapahoes."²³

After this encounter Friday took twenty lodges back to North and Middle Parks in Colorado, but lost several Indians, so he returned to the Fort Fetterman area of Wyoming. He really had no place he cared to go where they were legally accepted.

In 1873 the agent tried to get him to return a Ute boy, said to be Ouray's son. This lad has been captured about ten years before, traded several times among the Arapahoes, cared for by Friday's brother, and after his death, by Friday.²⁴ The outcome of the negotiations is not noted.

In 1875 Friday was interpreting at the Red Cloud agency for Black Coal and Little Wolf when the Indians had been given spoiled food and blankets too short for issue.²⁵ He was one of the scouts with Gen. George Crook's expedition of 1876.

George Custer's fate at that battle focused American interest on Indian affairs in the West and the public wanted more information and pictures. In all the photographs of Friday taken in the '70s, he wore white man's dress except for moccasins, and he had his long hair braided. One portrait shows him seated, holding a gun, with sagebrush in front and a mountain scenery background. William Henry Jackson posed him seated with Crazy Bull standing at his side. Mathew Brady photographed him in 1877 seated next to Black Coal with a group of other Indians and several white men. In this picture, he held his pipe and bag, tucked his golden eagle feather into a hat instead of his hair.

Most of the writers on the Indian campaigns of the '70s spoke favorably of Friday. J. Lee Humfreville wrote in 1899:

He had great influence among the Arapahoes as well as the Cheyennes, the Ogalala and Brule Sioux and did much to keep these people quiet. He prevented many wagon trains from being attacked.

Homer Wheeler in *Buffalo Days* commented on Friday's skill in interpreting subtleties of customs as well as the language. Only Judge G. Bourke in *On The Border with Crook* made a derogatory comment. "His morals were decidedly shady," wrote Bourke, and went on to comment on his intelligence and shrewdness. Friday's

23. *Report of the Commissioner*, 1870. (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1870), p. 179.

24. *Report of the Commissioner*, 1873. (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1874).

25. Trenholm, *The Arapahoes*, p. 254.

practice of polygamy and his occasional overindulgence in whiskey might have elicited this criticism.²⁶

At last Chief Washakie yielded and accepted these Arapahoes on the Wind River Reservation. In 1879 employment records listed Friday as a laborer and interpreter with an annual salary of three hundred dollars. There were two Shoshone interpreters with the same salary, and the agent received fifteen hundred dollars.

The Arapahoes lived about thirty miles from the Shoshones. Black Coal had the largest tipi in the village. It had embroidered bead circles with Ute scalps dangling from the centers. A reporter for *Harpers Magazine* who visited the reservation in 1880 was delighted to converse with Friday so easily. He needed an occasional explanation for some of Friday's cryptic comments like his calling his tenth wife a "puller." "She pulls hair," said Friday. She was called "The One Who Sleeps" because of her small eyes and was noted for a jealous disposition and bad temper.²⁷

Another writer describing Friday in his old age on the reservation wrote that he was "about sixty, not a white hair . . . He has lately taken a homestead, has a splendid garden and a good corral. He is surrounded by children and grandchildren, three very bright of the latter called Hayes, Grant and Garfield." The use of such names was encouraged in the late nineteenth century to help the white man identify individual Indians. Friday was sometimes called Friday Fitzpatrick. As a child he had been called "Warshinun" or Black Spot. He signed his name "Vash" in 1851 and Father DeSmet called him that. One agent called him "Friday Sorrel Horse," but "Sorrel Horse" was used for Medicine Man, a friend of Friday's too. The name most revealing of Friday's personality was that used in the 1870s, "Man Who Sits in the Corner and Keeps His Mouth Shut."²⁸

At the time of Friday's death, May 13, 1881, there were 1125 Shoshones on the reservation and 913 Arapahoes. The agent visited "each and every wicki-up to take an accurate census." Apparently Friday was the only Arapaho who spoke English. The Arapahoes had no written language and efforts by whites to work out a vocabulary failed. The agent reported his death:

26. J. Lee Humfreville, *Twenty Years Among Our Hostile Indians*. (New York: Hunter & Co., 1899), p. 254; Homer W. Wheller, *Buffalo Days*. (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1923), p. 219; John G. Bourke, *On the Border with Crook*. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1891), p. 406.

27. Lieutenant H. R. Lemly, "Among the Arapahoes," *Harpers New Monthly Magazine*, March, 1880, pp. 494-501.

28. *Council Fire*, April, 1881, p. 61; *Report of the Commissioner*, 1870, pp. 178, 179; Virginia Cole Trenholm, "Amanda Mary and the Dog Soldiers," *Annals of Wyoming*, Spring, 1974, p. 41; Hafen, *op. cit.*, pp. 187, 189; Humfreville, *op. cit.*, p. 116.

This means a severe blow to the tribe and the agency depriving them of their means of communicating their desires and the agency of understanding them. The only method we now have is by the sign language and our knowledge in that direction is very limited.²⁹

Friday was buried in an unmarked grave at a lonely spot on the reservation. The bodies of his descendants were placed together in later years in a special Friday Cemetery, one-half mile west of the Catholic church, south of the Ethete road. His great-grandson Chester pointed out to the author the grave of his son, William, who died in 1911, and a grandson, Harry (1882-1955). His great-great-grandson, Hubert, is one of the six Arapahoes on the tribal council, plays outstanding basketball, and rides in rodeos. His rodeo participation sometimes takes him to Fort Collins, the same area where Chief Friday once rode Old Swift Bird along the Cache la Poudre.

29. Report of the Commissioner, 1881, p. 183.

J. B. Okie

Lost Cabin Pioneer

CONCLUSION

By

KAREN L. LOVE

LEGISLATOR

Okie tried his hand at politics, once he had his sheep business going well. In the three years that he participated in state elections, he became involved in some of the crucial issues that Wyoming faced in its first decade of statehood. Several unfortunate circumstances, however, prevented his gaining importance as a politician.

Okie entered politics at the age of twenty-six when he was nominated by Fremont County for the first state legislature in 1890. The Republicans also nominated Eugene Amoretti for the second legislative seat and J. D. Woodruff for the Senate seat. Okie's two running mates were both about twenty years his senior, an indication of the respect he already held in the county. The *Fremont Clipper* called the three "men of means, men of brains and men that will command the respect of their fellow legislators."¹ Unfortunately for Okie's political career, he was a Republican in one of the very few weak counties the Grand Old Party had in the state.² In an election that gave the Republicans control of the state senate thirteen to three and the house twenty-six to seven,³ Fremont County elected Robert H. Hall, Democrat, rather than Okie.⁴ His election day showing, however, indicated the feelings of the Lost Cabin community toward its founder. In his precinct he received more votes than any other candidate for any other office.⁵ The settlers in Lost Cabin agreed about J. B. Okie's qualifications as a leader.

1. *Fremont Clipper*, September 5, 1890.

2. Lewis L. Gould, *Wyoming. A Political History 1868-1896*. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968), p. 122.

3. Larson, *History of Wyoming*. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1967), p. 265.

4. Clarence D. Jayne, and others, "Fremont County and Its Communities", (unpublished extension class project, University of Wyoming, 1952), p. 82.

5. *Fremont Clipper*, September 19, 1890.

In 1892, he was Fremont County's alternate delegate to the Republican National Convention in Minneapolis, Minnesota.⁶ That year the Republicans on the first ballot renominated President Benjamin Harrison over James G. Blaine and William McKinley by a wide margin. In the 1892 campaign, the Republicans behind Harrison were opposing Grover Cleveland, a Democrat, mostly on the question of the tariff. Both McKinley and Harrison were strong protectionists, so which one Okie backed is uncertain. Even though McKinley was a weak contender, this friend of the wool growers wanted to maintain a high protective tariff on wool.⁷ But Harrison too backed high protection. The Democrats' nomination of Grover Cleveland must have confused Okie somewhat. He opposed Cleveland's desire for free trade but agreed with his opposition to free silver.⁸ Okie, the sheepman, favored protection; Okie, the experienced businessman, favored the stable standard gold offered.

That same year J. B. Okie had the chance to make his views known when he was finally elected to the Wyoming State Legislature. His election as a Republican from Fremont County in 1892 was even more strange than his defeat in the Republican year of 1890. By 1892 the Democrats and Populists had gained strength in the state. Okie's election in 1892 suggests that his personal following had increased. He did not remain in the legislature long, however, because the Democrats, once elected, made an effort to unseat enough Republicans to gain absolute control of the House. Okie was one of the four legislators unseated.

The fight between the Republicans and Democrats for control of the House began as soon as the November returns were in. The decision in Carbon County rested upon whether the county canvassing board would count the votes from the Hanna district. The board hesitated because the Hanna returns lacked any indication of the precinct, and the poll list had not been signed. After much manipulation by both parties and much deliberation in and out of court, the Hanna returns were accepted and the two Democrats were declared elected.⁹ When the legislators met in January, 1893, they had to decide about the last two disputed seats, a decision that could control the outcome of the vote for United States Senator. The Democrats went into the battle with fourteen house seats and five senate seats, the Republicans with twelve house seats and eleven senate seats.¹⁰ If the Republicans gained the two disputed

6. *Ibid.*, June 17, 1892.

7. James Ford Rhodes, *History of the United States from Hayes to McKinley 1877-1896*. (New York: Macmillan Company, 1919), p. 348.

8. *Natrona Tribune*, March 3, 1900.

9. Gould, *op. cit.*, p. 176.

10. Larson, *op. cit.*, p. 287.

seats, they would have the twenty-five Legislative votes necessary to elect the United States Senator.¹¹ If the Democrats gained the two seats, they might then woo the five remaining Populists and control the state house and the United States Senate seat. J. B. Okie's seat was, therefore, a significant problem for the 1893 legislative session.

W. D. Pickett opposed Okie on November 8, 1892. The Democrats were anxious to prove that enough illegal votes had been cast in the North Fork and Lost Cabin precincts that Pickett should have the legislative seat. The Legislature spent several days arguing the Okie-Pickett contest. Democrats claimed that ninety-two people in North Fork and fourteen people in Lost Cabin had voted but were not residents of the voting district. Okie never denied that these voters had cast ballots in the wrong precinct. In fact, he stated before the legislature that he could prove fraud in precincts other than Lost Cabin and North Fork. Okie and his Republican backers argued that Pickett had not proved these voters ineligible to vote in Fremont County. They also declared that the legislature must presume the fairness of the election officers. They knew all the voters yet received them to vote without protest. Thirdly, the Republicans claimed that Pickett had automatically assumed that the illegal votes were cast for Okie but had made no effort to contact the voters to find out for whom they had voted. Okie himself requested that the legislature have the county clerk bring the ballots to Cheyenne for examination, but the Democrats would never approve of this.¹² If more fraud was still to be uncovered, as Okie claimed, the Republicans might also challenge the other legislative seat from Fremont County. Democrat James N. Farlow held this seat by a precarious margin of twelve votes over Okie.¹³ The Democrats did agree to have the ballots mailed to Cheyenne. Because nine of the thirty-three packages were unsealed when they arrived, the legislature, therefore, would not even consider them.¹⁴

The majority report presented by the Democrats made the whole case seem very simple. It recommended that the fraudulent votes be thrown out and that the legislature count the fraudulent votes cast for the two men in proportion to the votes they received in each precinct. This would automatically make Pickett the winner because North Fork and Lost Cabin had voted 106-73 and 62-7 for Okie respectively. Therefore he lost many more votes than

11. *Ibid.*, p. 288.

12. *Cheyenne Daily Leader*, January 21, 22, 1893.

13. Marie H. Erwin, *Wyoming Historical Blue Book, A Legal and Political History of Wyoming 1868-1943*. (Denver: Bradford-Robinson Printing Company, 1946), p. 1182.

14. *Cheyenne Daily Leader*, January 21, 22, 1893.

Pickett. Since Okie had won the election by only one vote, 621-620, in the first count, the new count made Pickett the victor. The Democrats, eager to gain House strength, had convinced themselves that the proportion system of dividing the fraudulent votes was entirely fair and would save time. The Republicans, with the same goal in mind, had convinced themselves that the fairest procedure would be to contact the illegal voters and get the exact count. Just before the final vote, B. B. Brooks rose to speak in defense of Okie and the minority report. Okie then spoke in his own behalf in what the *Cheyenne Daily Leader* called "a most unfortunate speech." He told the Legislature that he did not expect to get justice, that a prominent Democrat had assured him the question was entirely one of expediency.¹⁵ Of course, when the vote was called, all the Democrats voted for the proportion system, and all the Republicans voted against it. The Democrats were able to lure two Populist voters to their side which was enough to unseat Okie 17 to 15.¹⁶ The Democrats were jubilant. But in the next few days as the voting began for United States Senator, they realized their celebration had been premature.

The state House and Senate began balloting for the United States Senator from Wyoming on January 24, 1893. They never finished balloting. The Democrats had gained their four seats but had created such a precarious political balance that the legislature was never able to reach a decision. The distribution was twenty-one Democrats, twenty-three Republicans and five disagreeing Populists. Despite the many names presented and the infinite political maneuvering, the Democrats could never reach enough internal agreement and at the same time lure four Populists to their side; nor could the Republicans gain two Populist votes and agree among themselves at the same time. Each side fought to gain the twenty-five necessary votes, but neither was ever able to do so in the thirty ballots taken. The extent of the political intrigues was astonishing. Legislators were bribed for votes,¹⁷ bribed to take sudden business trips, and one was even escorted on a drinking spree and given a poison cocktail.¹⁸

On the sixth ballot J. B. Okie's name was brought up by the Republicans as a possible candidate. Rumors had spread that the legislators had found a new combination which might bring about the twenty-five vote majority needed. As a result, curious people crowded into the galleries to see who the man would be and if the vote would be successful. Okie's name was presented, a ballot taken, and the crowd was disappointed by another defeat. He did

15. *Cheyenne Daily Leader*, January 22, 1893.

16. *Ibid.*, January 22, 1893.

17. Larson, *op. cit.*, p. 288.

18. Gould, *op. cit.*, p. 188.

receive a very complimentary sixteen votes, however, from all twelve Republican house members and four Republican senators. The *Leader* called the vote for Okie a rebuke to those Democrats who had unseated the Fremont County legislator. No one considered it a real effort to make Okie United States senator because the Republicans never mentioned his name before or after that day. In addition, a senator had to be at least thirty years old and Okie was only twenty-eight. In the next session, on the seventh ballot, the Republicans were again split over their old favorites, Warren, Clark, and Richards.¹⁹

During the week that Okie served as a state legislator, he introduced two pieces of legislation. On January 17, 1893, he introduced House Joint Memorial Number Two requesting the congressional representatives of Wyoming to obtain justice for the Shoshone Indians.²⁰ The memorial stated that the Shoshones had been given the reservation lands in 1868 with the stipulation that the United States government could also place on their reservation other Indians friendly to the Shoshones. Under this pretext the government had placed there a portion of the Arapaho tribe that had always been an enemy of the Shoshones. For various excuses and reasons the Arapahoes had been allowed to remain on the reservation from year to year until 1891. In that year the Commissioner of Indian Affairs had decided that the Arapahoes were entitled to half of the reservation, were in fact owners of half the reservation, and had the same rights there as the Shoshones. The memorial requested immediate action in order to restore to the Shoshones their full treaty rights and also that any treaty negotiations to be made with the Shoshone alone.²¹ The legislature that year was too caught up in political battles, however, to worry about Indian problems. The Arapahoes remained on the reservation, and the Shoshones had to give up half of their reservation lands. Almost fifty years later the United States Court of Claims awarded them four million dollars for their loss. Their enemies, the Arapahoes, are still there today.²²

Okie also introduced a bill to provide for the payment of indemnity for livestock killed by railroads.²³ His interest in the Shoshones had been understandable, because if an Indian war had started, his own ranch would have been threatened. The railroad

19. *Cheyenne Daily Leader*, January 31, February 1, 1893.

20. Wyoming, State Legislature, House, *Journal of the House*, January 17, 1893, Wyoming State Archives and Historical Department, Cheyenne.

21. Wyoming, State Legislature, House, *A Joint Memorial Requesting the Congressional Representatives of Wyoming to Obtain Justice for the Shoshoni Indians*, H.J.M. No. 2, 1893, Wyoming State Archives and Historical Department, Cheyenne.

22. Larson, *op. cit.*, p. 106.

23. *Journal of the House, op. cit.*, January 18, 1893.

indemnity bill was an unusual bill, however, for a Fremont County delegate to introduce, especially in 1893. No railroad would pass near Lost Cabin for twenty years nor come to Lander, the county seat, for thirteen more years. Perhaps in this, too, like his interest in highways and wool scouring plants, Okie saw a long range benefit both for himself and for the state.

Okie became involved in politics once more after 1893, but his timing once again proved to be bad. He was nominated by the Fremont County Republicans for the state legislature in 1896. William McKinley opposed William Jennings Bryan in that presidential election year. Wyoming, favoring Bryan and his free-silver stand, gave all three electoral votes to him.²⁴ Okie, unfortunately, was an avowed supporter of the gold standard and undoubtedly backed McKinley's protection and bi-metalism platform. He must have realized his chances for election were slim because he did not even campaign for himself on the excuse of being prevented by business affairs.²⁵ Fremont County elected all Democrats to the state legislature that year.²⁶

Okie's luck seemed consistently poor in his short career as a legislator. He was a Republican in a county where Republicans were weak. He ran as a Republican candidate in one of the few elections in which his party was the underdog. He favored the gold standard when the rest of the West backed free silver. In the legislature he naively looked for justice and found only politics. His political opinions seemed consistently out of time and out of place.

LAND MAGNATE

During the 1890s when Okie was trying to expand the Bighorn Sheep Company and at the same time continue cash dividend payments to his mother, he recognized the beginnings of a new problem. More settlers were moving into the Lost Cabin area and taking advantage of government land offers, homesteading the water holes, and gaining control of vast areas of government range land. The sheep ranchers, who had become very uneasy about this threatening situation, began a land grab to gain water rights. The *Natrona Tribune* reported in 1900 that the sheepmen did not like the idea of taking up this land but that they were compelled to do so or go out of business. They believed that anyone who did not have plenty of land of his own might just as well sell out and leave the country.²⁷

Okie found himself in a difficult situation. As long as the water

24. Erwin, *op. cit.*, p. 1424.

25. *Fremont Clipper*, October 30, 1896.

26. Erwin, *op. cit.*, p. 1190.

27. *Natrona Tribune*, August 2, 1900.

holes had been free for public use, the need to buy land did not exist. But when other ranchers began to buy them up, he realized that he would either have to join the land grab to get some water rights of his own or give up the sheep business. He wrote to his mother, who still held almost half of the stock in the Bighorn Sheep Company, asking her permission to take up some water holes. She wrote back absolutely forbidding Okie to buy any water holes or to make any improvements on the ranch. She wanted him to stay out of debt and continue cash dividend payments to her. She said she did not want to own any Wyoming land. Her refusal prompted Okie to push his offer to buy her shares, and in 1898 she reluctantly signed over her partnership for \$30,000.²⁸ Okie was free to begin buying land.

Settlers could get government land in several different ways. The Homestead Act, passed in 1862, allowed any citizen who was the head of a family or at least twenty-one years old to claim 160 acres of unappropriated public land. The law required that he reside on the land for five years and cultivate it. If he did not wish to reside the full five years, after six months he could purchase the land for \$1.25 an acre.²⁹ After the five-year period, the settler would bring two witnesses before a United States Commissioner to testify about his residence and cultivation. With this final "proving up," the settler received title to his land after the payment of a small fee.³⁰

Claim could also be made under the extended Timber and Stone Act of 1892 which provided for a 160-acre land claim valuable chiefly for timber or stone and unfit for agriculture. This land could be purchased for \$2.50 an acre if the purchaser signed an affidavit that the timber or stone was for his own personal use.³¹

The Revised Desert Lands Act of 1891 was a third method of securing western lands. Under this law, a person could claim 320 acres of arid lands if he paid \$.25 an acre and irrigated it within three years. Improvements over the three-year period had to total \$3.00 an acre, and irrigation had to be available for the entire acreage. At the time of proving up, one-eighth of the land had to be under cultivation. Before title could be granted, the settler had to pay a final fee of \$1.00 an acre.³²

28. Susan P. Okie v. John B. Okie, United States District Court Case 884, 1902, Federal Records Center, Denver, Colorado.

29. After 1891 fourteen months residence was specified, but six months was allowed to elapse before residency was actually required. After 1907 the full fourteen months residency was required. Benjamin Horace Hibbard, *A History of Public Land Policies*. (New York: Macmillan Company, 1924), p. 389.

30. Larson, *op. cit.*, p. 174.

31. Hibbard, *op. cit.*, 464.

32. *Ibid.*, pp. 427 & 431.

Another method was through the Isolated or Disconnected Lands Act. A settler could petition to have 160 acres of isolated land sold at public auction. He then would be bidding against anyone else interested in that 160-acre parcel.

By taking advantage of the several government land laws, a rancher could get 1120 acres.³³ This was far from being sufficient for a successful ranch, however, because a single cow in Wyoming requires forty acres for grazing.³⁴ As the range became overcrowded, as water rights began to fall into private ownership, and as more and more settlers claimed land under the public land laws, western ranchers had to take positive steps or lose their businesses. After claiming their legal shares, a great many ranchers built fences around their land but at the same time quietly extended them to include thousands of acres of public land.³⁵ The "Linnen Report," completed in 1906, probed the illegal fencing practices of Wyoming's first state governor, then senator, Francis E. Warren. The report also mentioned thirty-five other prominent Wyoming ranchers who had illegally fenced about half-a-million acres of government land.³⁶ Okie's name may or may not have appeared on that list, but he was fencing government land illegally right along with the best of them.³⁷ After the Warren scandal was revealed, President Roosevelt began a government crackdown on unlawful fences. Law suits were instituted, one-day jail sentences handed out, and the illegal fences torn down.³⁸

The loss of the fences did not lessen the need for range land and water rights. Some Wyoming ranchers, deprived of their illegal fences, began to favor the leasing of public lands. Sheepmen in general still opposed leasing for fear that it would cause careless over-grazing of the range³⁹ and retard settlement.⁴⁰ In any case, leasing legislation was a long way off, and as a result, ranchers were left with just their ingenuity to gain the land they badly needed.

The technique they developed for securing land was similar in many parts of the West. Persons who needed more land than they could get legally, be they a timber company, speculator or rancher, would arrange for someone else to acquire land for them and

33. Larson, *op. cit.*, p. 175.

34. *Ibid.*, p. 173.

35. Paul W. Gates, *History of Public Land Law Development*. (Washington, D. C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1968), p. 473.

36. Larson, *op. cit.*, p. 383.

37. Van Guelder Okie, unfinished autobiography, p. 11, J. B. Okie biographic file, Western History Research Center, University of Wyoming.

38. Larson, *op. cit.*, p. 383.

39. Edward Norris Wentworth, *America's Sheep Trails*, (Ames, Iowa: Iowa State College Press, 1948), p. 516.

40. Larson, *op. cit.*, p. 384.

swear falsely that they had proved up on it. When they received the title, these entrymen, as they were called, would transfer it to the person with whom they had made the deal. Agents investigating fraudulent land claims in Nebraska reported the cattlemen had hired "thousands upon thousands of loafers, tramps, and railway graders, and Negroes" to file on land for them.⁴¹ The practice was so widespread and so generally accepted in the West that United States attorney for Wyoming, Timothy F. Burke, very seldom prosecuted anyone for land fraud. He justified this by saying that "inasmuch as three-fourths of the public domain had been proved up by perjury, to let them have it; that the paying of taxes was enough punishment for the deed, and what the states needed was the land on the tax rolls to reduce taxes."⁴² In Nebraska people openly boasted that a genuine legal homestead entry had not been made for some time.⁴³

Okie's participation in this system of land acquisition should not surprise anyone familiar with the ranchers' land problems at the turn of the century. In his own words, he needed water or he would go out of business.⁴⁴ People he associated with, from government officials to common sheep herders, knew of and participated in the land fraud schemes. Westerners accepted it as a common and unavoidable practice.⁴⁵ It is inconceivable that J. B. Okie alone would have moralistically supported a law that most other ranchers considered unworkable.

As soon as he had bought his mother's shares in the Bighorn Sheep Company and no longer had to comply with her objections to expansion, J. B. Okie began to buy land. Before 1904 he acquired land that other settlers had claimed under the Homestead Act and the Desert Lands Act.⁴⁶ Some 1371 acres were filed under the Homestead Act and 4809 acres under the Desert Lands Act. After 1904 settlers acquired land for him almost totally under the Timer and Stone Act and after 1908 under the Isolated or Disconnected Lands Act. Under these two acts he gained some 3083 acres and 4213 acres respectively up to 1912. By 1912 he held 13,476 acres of land that had been claimed and allegedly proved up by other settlers.⁴⁷

41. Gates, *op. cit.*, p. 487.

42. Larson, *op. cit.*, p. 374, quoting attorney Timothy F. Burke.

43. Gates, *op. cit.*, p. 487.

44. S. P. Okie v. J. B. Okie, *op. cit.*, testimony of J. B. Okie.

45. Mrs. Don Robson, personal interview in Lysite, Wyoming, July, 1971.

46. United States of America v. John B. Okie *et al.*, Circuit Court case 182, Bill of Complaint, filed August 20, 1916, Federal Records Center, Denver, Colorado.

47. *Ibid.* These figures are the estimate made by agent E. O. Fuller of the extent of Okie's fraudulent claims. His land holdings probably ex-

In August of 1910, the Department of the Interior in Washington, D. C., received a letter from someone signing himself J. B. Moe. The letter complained that certain requirements of the law had not been complied with by John B. Okie and the Bighorn Sheep Company in securing certain desert land entries. The Department immediately sent a special investigating agent, E. O. Fuller, to make an undercover probe of the charges. After Fuller completed his investigation in 1916, the United States Government filed suit against Okie.⁴⁸

The suit, which lasted nine years, alleged that Okie had hired people to claim government lands fraudulently for him. It outlined what secret agent E. O. Fuller claimed was Okie's technique. Okie supposedly first chose the land he wanted, then approached some employee or friend and offered to pay him anywhere from \$25 to

	Homestead	Desert	Timber	Isolated	Total
1899	254 acres	520 acres	554 acres	0 acres	1,328
1900	637	280	0	0	917
1901	0	0	220	0	220
1902	0	720	0	0	720
1903	320	3129	0	0	3449
1904	160	0	160	0	320
1905	0	0	760	0	760
1906	0	0	120	0	120
1907	0	0	829	0	829
1908	0	0	440	560	1000
1909	0	160	0	1000	1160
1910	0	0	0	2333	2333
1911	0	0	0	160	160
1912	0	0	0	160	160
TOTAL	1371	4809	3083	4213	13,476

Table I. Alleged Fraudulent Land Entries

\$50 if he would enter the land as his own.⁴⁹ Okie would promise to build and pay for any improvements the law required and pay all entry fees. The entryman had only to sign the papers and take them to the land office at the appropriate time.⁵⁰ Okie would even supply the two witnesses needed. Chance of discovery was slight

ceeded these figures because of land acquired legally and therefore not reported by Fuller.

48. Table I. This chart shows the entries the government alleged were fraudulently claimed by Okie. The chart shows three periods of unusually low claims: 1. 1901-the year Okie's mother sued him in Federal District Court and the Bighorn Sheep Company was therefore being thoroughly investigated by her lawyers; 2. 1906-the year Francis E. Warren was accused of illegally fencing government land; 3. 1911-the years following Moe's letter to the Department of the Interior. If these land claims were indeed totally legal, these three trends seem unexplainable.

49. United States v. J. B. Okie, *op. cit.*, Testimony of witnesses Frank Edgerton and John B. Wynn.

50. *Ibid.*, Bill of Complaint.

because the commissioners before whom proof was made were Okie's full-time employees.⁵¹ The two parties would sign the deed prior to the time of proving up but leave the date blank. After the entryman secured the title, Okie would keep the deed in his possession rather than file it with the county recorder's office. If he had recorded so many land deeds, he would have aroused suspicion; therefore, he would carefully plan his recording dates. According to the investigating agent, Okie used this scheme or some slight variation of it to defraud the United States Government on ninety-eight different counts over a period of thirteen years.⁵²

In the first phase of the trial, thirty-four of the ninety-eight entries were dismissed under the Statute of Limitations. The deeds had been filed for record more than six years prior to the date of the suit. Because they had never been challenged within that time, they were thereafter barred from suit whether they were fraudulent or not. Eight others were dismissed for miscellaneous minor reasons. Of the fifty-six cases left, there remained one homestead, one desert land, nineteen timber and stone, and thirty-five isolated tracts. The judge dismissed the homestead case because the government could not prove that Okie had made the agreement with the entryman before the entry was made. The desert lands case and four of the timber and stone cases were also dismissed for lack of sufficient evidence.⁵³

Ten of the remaining timber and stone entries offered some evidence to support the charge of fraud. The evidence, however, did not seem sufficient to the judge. He dismissed all ten cases on the legal principle that an agreement to purchase a timber and stone claim after the initial application and before final proof is not a violation of law. In each of the ten, the prosecution had failed to prove when Okie and the entryman in question had made the purchase agreement. The extremely hazy memories of five out of the ten witnesses caused the prosecuting attorney great difficulty. For example, one witness barely remembered taking up the land, was confused about the location of it, but thought it was subsequently sold to the defendant. He had, however, no distinct recollection of the transaction. In another one of these ten cases, the witness distinctly remembered that Okie had induced him to file on a claim. He did not remember proving up or paying any fees but said that as far as he knew, Okie had paid the fees. The judge ruled insufficient evidence because the conversation between the entryman and Okie was the only proof that Okie had actually taken up the claim. He stated that to annul a patent on land for fraud, the testimony to support such a charge must be clear, unequivocal,

51. *Ibid.*, Judge's Memorandum, filed November 2, 1925.

52. *Ibid.*, Bill of Complaint.

53. *Ibid.*, Judge's Memorandum.

and convincing. The prosecution had also claimed that the entries under the Timber and Stone Act did not even qualify as sources of timber or stone. The stone claims were too far from a market to be considered of value. Some had no value for stone even if there had been a market. Because evidence was insufficient, the judge ruled that the matter of the character of the land was immaterial.⁵⁴

The last five questionable entries under the Timber and Stone Act furnished *prima facie* proof of fraud. These witnesses testified that Okie had selected the land and approached them about taking up a claim on it. He had paid them a fee of \$25 to \$50, paid all the expenses and entry fees himself, and made out all the papers. These witnesses claimed to have no personal interest in the land but took it up for Okie.⁵⁵

With all these facts before him, the judge had to decide whether Okie was guilty of fraud. After nine years of petitions, counter-petitions, and testimony, Okie sat waiting for the judge's verdict. Undoubtedly a bit uneasy, he faced the prospect of paying the government \$84,607.85, the rental value of the land he held illegally,⁵⁶ a sum that would have ruined him. As the judge read through his final decision on the case, Okie must have been very thankful that he was being tried by a Wyoming judge who understood ranchers' land problems and was sympathetic toward them.

In his final statement on the case, the judge first discussed the question of whether the entries were taken up for the purpose they claimed; were they actually valuable for timber and stone? Weighing the evidence of the entrymen and the old-resident ranchmen in Lost Cabin against the testimony of the special agents whom he considered to be usually unskilled in land uses, the judge said he was inclined to accept the testimony of the old-time residents of the community. He therefore ruled that the claims had been taken up for the purposes required by law.⁵⁷

The judge then took up the question of limitations and laches.⁵⁸ The last of the five allegedly fraudulent entries had been completed July 26, 1909, while suit was not instituted until July 20, 1916. Under the Statute of Limitations, the government could not bring suit after six years from the date of patent. Another statute, however, stated that in case of fraud, the six-year period began with the discovery of the fraud, provided that due diligence was exercised in its discovery. The court had to decide when the

54. *Ibid.*

55. *Ibid.*

56. *Ibid.*, Bill of Complaint.

57. *Ibid.*, Judge's Memorandum.

58. Laches is defined as unreasonable and inexcusable delay in asserting a right, so that the court is warranted in refusing relief.

Statute of Limitations began for these patents and when the alleged fraud had actually been discovered.

On the question of the patents, the court noted that the deeds had been recorded less than six years before the suit, but that the dates they carried were more than six years before the suit. Okie explained that he recorded deeds personally when convenience permitted; this policy had caused the delay in recording. He testified, however, that for more than six years he had been in open and notorious possession of the land and paid taxes on it in his own name. The judge ruled that these facts were sufficient notice to the government and were equal to registering the title. On the basis of this ruling, the judge dismissed the last five timber and stone entry cases. The counsel for the plaintiff alleged that Okie had not recorded the deeds in order to avoid arousing the suspicion of the government. The judge said that since the government had been collecting taxes on the land, they knew it was in Okie's possession.⁵⁹

The final decision of the judge concerning the thirty-five isolated land claims rested on establishing when the fraud had been discovered. The government claimed that it knew nothing of the fraud before receiving the letter from Moe in 1910, nor did it have any way of knowing of the fraud because Okie had retained the deeds. Okie's lawyers reminded the court that the letter had referred to irregularities in desert entries, but the court had dismissed all twenty-two of the challenged desert cases. The letter from Moe was therefore not a true revelation of fraud. Since the time of discovery of the fraud could not be definitely determined, the case could not be removed from under the Statute of Limitations. Six years had passed; therefore, even if the evidence was sufficient to establish fraud, the cases were barred from suit. The judge added that even if the court were to allow that the fraud was revealed in 1910, Okie had made five isolated tracts entries after that date without government objection. This indicated to the judge that either there was no fraud or that the government was so exceedingly lax in pursuing its cause that it should be entitled to no particular consideration in a court of equity where the relief must be based upon a showing of diligence after notice.⁶⁰ The government's complaint having been dismissed, Okie left the courtroom with clear title to his 57,000 acre empire.⁶¹

59. *United States v. J. B. Okie, op. cit.*, Judge's Memorandum.

60. *Ibid.*

61. "Empire for Sale," *Time*, (June 11, 1945), p. 19.

LOST CABIN 1884-1930

At the height of its prosperity, Lost Cabin was an important commercial center for the ranchers in the area. When the railroad came to Casper in 1888, a stage line was established from Casper to Thermopolis over Birdseye Pass, and Lost Cabin became a stopping place on the line.⁶² Some say Okie thought Lost Cabin's "strategic" position between Casper and the Big Horn Basin would eventually make it one of Wyoming's major cities.⁶³ He was not alone in this belief. In 1887 the *Fremont Clipper* predicted that very soon there would be drawn together a large and prosperous community at Lost Cabin because of the rich mines in the area.⁶⁴ This referred, no doubt, to the Lost Cabin mine, at that time still being searched for. The mine was never found, but the prediction came true, for a while at least. Lost Cabin never gained the population of a mining boom town because it was more of a supply center for outlying ranches. Nevertheless, the town grew in size and prosperity from 1883, the year Okie settled there, until 1914 when the Chicago, Burlington and Quincy Railroad built to Lysite.

The first building in Lost Cabin was the little dugout cabin Okie built beside Badwater Creek in 1884. This was followed three years later by a larger log cabin built up on the first stream terrace in anticipation of Okie's marriage. The second cabin expanded to nine rooms in the 1890s as the Okie family grew. The place began to look more like a prospering ranch as he added a log stable, corrals for the sheep and horses, and irrigation ditches. In the spring the dry Lost Cabin area took on a new look as the eighty acres of cleared land began to show green sprouts of alfalfa and grain. Okie's next project was to build reservoirs for water storage in order to save the spring run-off for the dry season.⁶⁵ He continued clearing land for cultivation, until he eventually had 900 acres.⁶⁶ By 1891 Lost Cabin was a community of ten or twelve log buildings,⁶⁷ and settlers were also moving into the surrounding country. Dan Ralston, who had taken sheep on shares from J. D. Woodruff, settled on lower Badwater Creek, John Morrison brought his family to Poison Creek, and John and Hattie Signor came up from the Sweetwater with their children and took over

62. Van Guelder Okie, an unfinished story of J. B. Okie's Life in Lost Cabin, p. 5, J. B. Okie biographical file, Western History Research Center, University of Wyoming.

63. "The Big Tepee," Stories of Pacific Powerland, Radio script No. 484, J. B. Okie Biographical file, Western History Research Center, University of Wyoming.

64. *Fremont Clipper*, September 17, 1887.

65. V. G. Okie, *op. cit.*, p. 4.

66. Van Guelder Okie, rough outline for his unfinished autobiography, p. 21; in the possession of this author.

67. *Ibid.*, p. 3.

the Lost Cabin post office.⁶⁸ The Badwater country had enough settlers and Lost Cabin enough traffic by 1892 to begin supporting local businesses.

The records do not indicate which business was established first or even when it was established. By June of 1892, however, the newspapers announced that Mrs. Hattie Signor had thoroughly renovated "the place" and the Lost Cabin Hotel was open for business.⁶⁹ The paper did not say whether "the place" had previously been an operating hotel or just a vacated building, but this is the first reference to a business establishment in Lost Cabin.

Within the next decade, Okie began establishing his own businesses in the town. In 1895 he built his first Bighorn Sheep Company store, which in turn drew the ranchers into town. The money he paid his employees came back to his own pocket through his mercantile store. Lost Cabin began to look like a real town when Okie added a saloon, a livery barn, and a blacksmith shop,⁷⁰ new businesses that drew even more people into Lost Cabin. Stockmen refreshed themselves at the saloon, christened the "Dew Drop Inn,"⁷¹ While their horses were shod at the blacksmith's shop or boarded at the livery stable. Ranch wives chatted together over bolts of fabric in the mercantile store. Sheep herders and cowboys came to town with six months' wages and settled themselves around a poker table in the saloon. After a day or two, they would return to work broke and slightly hung over,⁷² their ideas of challenging the few professional gamblers who hung around there having been shattered. Meanwhile Okie continued to gather in the profits from all his businesses.

Increased demands created the need for more buildings in the town. The hotel business continued to be lucrative and created some competition for the Signors. Okie sold his old cook shack to the Sidney Willoughby family who enlarged it and called it the Willoughby Hotel.⁷³ The saloon crowd promptly renamed it the Hotel de Willoughby because of the way Sidney Willoughby always bragged about the social status of his family back in Kentucky.⁷⁴ The need for a jail was met as economically as the need for a hotel. From the time J. B. Okie was appointed constable in 1894,⁷⁵ the ice house served as a jail and reportedly succeeded in cooling off

68. V. G. Okie, story of J. B. Okie, *op. cit.*, p. 3.

69. *Natrona Tribune*, June 24, 1892.

70. V. G. Okie, story of J. B. Okie, *op. cit.*, p. 4.

71. Henry Jensen, personal interview in Lysite, Wyoming, July, 1971.

72. V. G. Okie, story of J. B. Okie, *op. cit.*, p. 7.

73. Mrs. W. I. Lewis, written for Mrs. Frank Rate, "J. B. Okie started town," *Wyoming State Journal*, July 1, 1971.

74. V. G. Okie, story of J. B. Okie, *op. cit.*, p. 7.

75. *Fremont Clipper*, November 23, 1894.

troublemakers.⁷⁶ Around 1918 he built one of the largest buildings in Lost Cabin as an administration center for his various businesses. The huge plate glass windows on two sides of the structure gave it the appearance of a metropolitan department store. The employees could see what was happening in half the town right from their desks. On the second floor were apartments for them to rent.

Okie kept the more abstract needs of the community in mind, as well, when building his town. When the roller skating mania hit Wyoming, Lost Cabin went the way of the libertines. The *Wyoming Derrick* warned that the roller skating craze was running riot at Rawlins, and the usual number of scandal and divorce cases would surely result.⁷⁷ But Okie seemed undaunted by the charges that "it brings the virtuous and innocent into contact with and under the influence of the rake and the libertine, and scores of virtuous women have fallen by these influences."⁷⁸ He brought carpenters out from Omaha to lay a maple floor in the rink he had built.⁷⁹ After the fad passed, the skating rink was converted into a dance pavilion. The dances attracted just as many people from miles around. When the Yellowstone Highway came through in 1911, the old dance pavilion was converted into the Oasis Hotel to accommodate the increasing tourist traffic.⁸⁰ Here travelers could sit at tables covered with linen table cloths and set with real silver. The Oasis never made much money, however, because as one old-timer recalls, "It was too up-town for most folks."⁸¹ Another dance pavilion, built to replace the old one, reportedly cost Okie \$7000. Every season he would host several dances there for the entire surrounding community.⁸² Often traveling theatrical groups, on their way to Thermopolis from Casper, would stop for the night and put on a show in the pavilion.⁸³ Okie also used the hall to show free movies on his own hand-crank projector. Everyone was invited and everyone came. He would come down himself to run the projector just to make sure it was done right. When the latest Mary Pickford movie opened in Denver, Casper, and

76. V. G. Okie, story of J. B. Okie, *op. cit.*, p. 5.

77. *Wyoming Derrick*, October 9, 1890.

78. Larson, *op. cit.*, p. 210, quoting Hayford, an editor in Laramie in 1885.

79. Percy Shallenberger, "In Memory of John B. Okie," oration given at Okie's funeral November 10, 1930, p. 5, J. B. Okie biographical file, Western Research Center, University of Wyoming.

80. Jensen interview, *op. cit.*

81. *Ibid.*

82. William E. Curtis, "Chicago Man Guides Huge Power Project," August 6, 1909, unidentified newspaper article, Fremont County file F-88, Western History Research Center, University of Wyoming.

83. Jensen interview, *op. cit.*

Salt Lake City, the Lost Cabin people would be seeing it at the same time free.⁸⁴

Okie supplied housing for many people in Lost Cabin. He had several ranch style houses built that seemed like palaces when compared with the average log cabin of the day. In 1918 he built several California bungalows, one of which his family used as a guest house and christened the "Doll House."⁸⁵ For his herders and ranch hands, he built a huge bunkhouse in 1916 that was handsome enough to be situated across the street from his own mansion and to be converted eventually into a home for a noted western artist, Henry Jackson. The ranchhands considered the bunkhouse deluxe for that area because of its twenty sleeping rooms and separate game room for the men.⁸⁶

Since Lost Cabin never had good well water, Okie built another reservoir to supply the town with fresh water.⁸⁷ A ditch carried water to this water works reservoir from Badwater Creek two miles away. To get below the frost line, the pipeline from the reservoir had to be buried five feet under the ground. It carried water to every building in town that needed it.⁸⁸ Out in the same area around 1917, Okie cleared land for a golf course where he could indulge himself, his eastern friends and anyone else in the community in one of his favorite pastimes.⁸⁹ Happy to find such a pleasure spot in the middle of this isolated area, no golf lover ever complained of the coarse natural grass on the "greens." Okie also built a sewer system in Lost Cabin, a carbide lighting system, and finally, around the time of World War I, a diesel power plant to generate electricity for the community.⁹⁰

Okie's improvements extended up into the Owl Creek Mountains. He bought a saw mill around 1900 in Omaha, had it shipped to Casper and freighted from there by wagon. The wagons hauled it up into the mountains north of Lost Cabin where Pat Conley was put in charge of its operation.⁹¹

This new source of lumber spurred construction of more frame buildings in Lost Cabin,⁹² and as a result, for years there was no surplus lumber for any other community. Okie also hired two coal miners to start a coal mine on Alkali Creek about six miles

84. *Ibid.*

85. Lewis, J. B. Okie," *op. cit.*

86. Hugh S. Day interview.

87. Jensen interview, *op. cit.*

88. V. G. Okie, autobiography, p. 28, *op. cit.*

89. Jensen interview, *op. cit.*

90. *Ibid.*

91. V. G. Okie, autobiography, p. 9, *op. cit.*

92. *Ibid.*, p. 28.

from Lost Cabin. The community then had coal to replace the wood fuel used up to that time.⁹³

Okie was an avid road builder and for good reasons. His interest in progress and modern inventions prompted him to purchase the first car in central Wyoming. Thirteen years after the Duryea brothers assembled the very first successful automobile in the East,⁹⁴ Okie had his own car and was bumping along in the sagebrush flats around Lost Cabin. His interest in roads was probably spurred on when he to to ship his car west by railroad and then to Lost Cabin on a freight wagon.⁹⁵ The newspapers noted the great event when the first automobile in that part of the country passed through Casper in March, 1906, on its way to Okie's ranch.⁹⁶ The car was an Holsmobile-Great Smith and the apple of Okie's eye.⁹⁷ He did all the mechanical work on the car himself, there being no one else for a hundred miles who would have known anything about its insides.⁹⁸

Although he gave everyone in town a ride, for years no one but Okie drove the Great Smith. The only exception was when his son Van attempted it once when Okie was off on a trip. Van, who was then about ten or twelve, had watched his father drive the car many times and was sure he could handle it as well. After inviting two children, a store clerk, and a neighbor, Mrs. Frank Rate, to ride along, Van started out the road toward Thermopolis. The ride was a short one. When he tried to adjust the steering wheel as he had seen his father do, to his surprise it came off in his hands. The car roared off through the sagebrush coming to rest at last in a gully. A team of horses had to pull it back to Lost Cabin. The gardener, who had offered to fix it, soon had the garage floor strewn with loose parts. Becoming very worried as the repairs made doubtful progress, Van decided to pack his horse for a little trip, and the minute he saw the family buckboard come over the hill, he jumped on his horse and headed for the mountains. He stayed away five days to let his father cool off, because Van knew very well how J. B. Okie felt about his Holsmobile-Great Smith.⁹⁹

Without the aid of any county money, Okie hired a crew of men to do road-building work.¹⁰⁰ With teams and scrapers, picks

93. *Ibid.*, p. 12.

94. Larson, *op. cit.*, p. 344.

95. V. G. Okie, autobiography, *op. cit.*, p. 26.

96. *Natrona County Tribune*, March 22, 1906. T. A. Larson places the first car in Casper around 1908, *History of Wyoming*, p. 344.

97. Van Guelder Okie, a hand-written rough outline for his story of J. B. Okie, in the author's possession, p. 7.

98. V. G. Okie, autobiography, *op. cit.*, p. 25.

99. *Ibid.*, p. 26.

100. Jensen interview.

and shovels, they built from the Thermopolis road all the way up Badwater Creek over the Owl Creek divide to the head of Deep Creek.¹⁰¹ This road from the old post office at Badwater up to where it meets the Big Horn Trail was known as the Okie Automobile Road and later as the Okie Trail.¹⁰² In places this road passed over such steep terrain that the crew had to build rock walls of field stone. After sixty years these walls are still solid.¹⁰³ The Okie Automobile Road led up to a summer camp on the divide between Deep Creek and Badwater Creek. Here the family spent several weeks every summer living in tents, taking advantage of the cooler mountain weather.¹⁰⁴ Okie also built a road over Cedar Ridge east of Lost Cabin,¹⁰⁵ which had to cross Sand Draw, a constant trap for cars. They would invariably get bogged down in the sand and have to be pulled out by a team. Okie took care of the problem, however, by instructing his road crew to lay a concrete slab across the draw, a project that prevented further trouble.¹⁰⁶

When a proposal was made in 1917 to construct a cement highway from Cheyenne to Yellowstone Park, Okie enthusiastically supported it. He believed so strongly that the scheme would pay big interest to the state that he offered to contribute \$10,000 toward the construction.¹⁰⁷ No records show whether his money was accepted or not, but the new State Highway Commission accomplished very little in 1917 and 1918.¹⁰⁸ The country had a war to finance, and therefore, little more than planning and authorizing highways was accomplished that year.¹⁰⁹ In 1919 when the legislature adopted a new highway bill, they put the emphasis on building roads for industrial development rather than tourist travel.¹¹⁰ The Highway Commission was being very careful to locate the roads in areas that would not necessitate later abandonment.¹¹¹ All these trends worked against Okie and his Lost Cabin enterprises, despite his offer of \$10,000. A cement highway through Lost Cabin to Yellowstone would have made a significant difference in the town's future. The railroad, however, had already by-passed Lost Cabin in 1914 to avoid a "dog leg" in its

101. Lewis, "J. B. Okie," *op. cit.*

102. David Baskett, personal interview in Casper, Wyoming, June, 1971.

103. Jensen interview, *op. cit.*

104. *Ibid.*

105. Lewis, "J. B. Okie," *op. cit.*

106. Jensen interview, *op. cit.*

107. *Wyoming State Journal*, January 26, 1917.

108. Frances Birkhead Beard, *Wyoming from Territorial Days to the Present* Vol. I (Chicago: American Historical Society, Inc., 1933) p. 623, quoting Governor Carey.

109. *Ibid.*, p. 624.

110. *Ibid.*, p. 625.

111. *Ibid.*, p. 626.

route to Shoshoni. With this precedent set, the Highway Commission, with its 1919 policy toward industrial development, was not likely to build a cement highway to Lost Cabin for the sake of tourists' convenience. In fact, by 1923 the highway project through the Wind River Canyon had been started,¹¹² an effort that eliminated Lost Cabin as a stopping place between Casper and Thermopolis. For years Okie had maintained the roads on all sides of Lost Cabin for ten miles at his own expense, probably hoping to create a traffic pattern through the town. But these years of effort and his cash offer were not enough to convince the Highway Commission.

Despite the modern conveniences and amusements Lost Cabin enjoyed during its years of prosperity, it still displayed the characteristics of an early western town. For example, the citizens' quite unsubtle technique for dealing with the unemployed would horrify a modern social worker. The *Fremont Clipper* reported in February of 1899, that a group of twenty-six masked men had caught John Abbott two miles north of Lost Cabin and whipped him nearly to death. His family was in a destitute condition and he would not work to support them. The men had given him one hundred and three lashes, and then the captain offered him a free lecture:

We are very sorry that we have to take the law into our hands and punish you, but it is necessary. Now, Mr. Abbott, we will give you three days to get a job and get to work and support your family, or leave the country. We have had enough of such cats in this community, and there is no room for any more. Now we don't want any hem-hawing about it but go to work; if we have to call a second time your hide will hang. Now we hope you will take a tumble and save further trouble.¹¹³

How the *Clipper* got the full and exact text of the lecture is a mystery, but the intent of the lecture itself was perfectly clear.

Even in the sophisticated elegance of the Okie mansion, the Lost Cabin citizens could never quite escape reminders that they did indeed live in the "Wild West." At one of the many parties the Okies gave, the dancing was suddenly interrupted when a man burst out of the kitchen, collided with several dancing couples, slipped on the waxed floor, and finally plunged through the front door. In the same instant, another man burst from the kitchen in hot pursuit, waving a revolver. He too ran out the front door. In a few seconds the guests heard a loud, shattering crash as if every window in the mansion had suddenly broken. When the excitement finally waned, Okie probably stood up on the great oak

112. *Wyoming State Journal*, January 26, 1917.

113. "Starved His Family; White Caps Cowhide a Worthless Citizen Near Lost Cabin," *Fremont Clipper*, February 3, 1899.

staircase in the entrance hall in an attempt to explain the intrusion to his guests. A man named Otto Chenoweth was being taken to Casper by the sheriff and a deputy to stand trial for stealing horses. The three had stopped in Lost Cabin for supper, but finding no one at the hotel, they had come up to the Okie mansion. While they were having supper in the kitchen, Chenoweth made a dash for it. Unfortunately, once outside he had attempted to circle the house to confuse his pursuers but had plunged into some glass hotbeds in the side yard. When the sheriff reached him, he was standing knee-deep in broken glass, afraid to move in any direction until light was brought.¹¹⁴ When the three men were finally back in the kitchen finishing their supper, Chenoweth, who was Massachusetts bred and well educated, sent his apologies in to the ladies for so unceremoniously intruding upon their presence. He also apologized for the sheriff's rudeness in entering in such an ungentlemanly manner with his revolver drawn.¹¹⁵ After that Chenoweth was called the "gentleman horse thief," an apt tribute to the varied life styles in Lost Cabin.

Some outsiders believed Lost Cabin was a town where thieves found a friendly welcome. A week after the capture of the notorious horse thief, Tom O'Day, one of the Hole-in-the-Wall gang, the *Denver Times* denounced Lost Cabin on this very charge. Of course, O'Day had often spent time in the town even when he was wanted. He would stop in at the Dew Drop Inn saloon for a drink and a game of cards, knowing he was relatively safe. For emergencies, however, he always kept his horse saddled and ready at the back door and a thirty-foot rope tied from the horse to his wrist.¹¹⁶ When he was finally captured on November 23, 1903, he was trying to herd some stolen horses north to Montana. The sheriff, with O'Day in custody, took the horses to Lost Cabin where during the night some of O'Day's friends let them out of the corral and drove them away. Probably on the basis of this incident, the *Denver Times* reported:

Nearly everybody at Lost Cabin are friends of the thieves (the Hole-in-the-Wall gang), and a report has reached Casper that four of the most prominent men in that section will be arrested and taken to Lander on the charge of abetting the thieves. One of the men is a millionaire sheepman who was connected with the Murphy murder case.¹¹⁷

The citizens of Lost Cabin, furious about this public accusation,

114. V. G. Okie, autobiography, p. 21, *op. cit.*

115. Alfred James Mokler, *History of Natrona County, Wyoming, 1888-1922*, (Chicago: R. R. Donnelly & Sons Co., 1923), p. 331.

116. V. G. Okie, autobiography, p. 14.

117. "He Gets Four Dollars a Column," *Natrona County Tribune*, December 3, 1903.

wrote a letter to the *Natrona County Tribune* denouncing the man they suspected had written the article. The letter indicated that they considered themselves a law-abiding community and resented accusations that they were a rough, bandit-harboring, uncivilized town.¹¹⁸ Facts would indicate that they were an odd combination of both.

Although Okie's coal mine near Lost Cabin was a sign to the town of its progressiveness, the Casper paper used it as an excuse to mention Lost Cabin's bad reputation. A miner had been killed in a cave-in, making two deaths in one week for the town. The paper noted that they never had any deaths there in years past, but that it had often been remarked how many people there were in Lost Cabin who ought to die. To this time no one had consented. The paper added that since they had planted a cemetery there, everybody seemed to want to move in.¹¹⁹ By the time the fourteenth gravestone was erected in that cemetery, even the Lost Cabin citizens had to remark about the fact that not one person had died of old age.¹²⁰

J. B. Okie did his best to make Lost Cabin a progressive community by building roads and modern housing, by bringing in the kinds of entertainment enjoyed in large cities, by developing sewer and water systems and by entertaining graciously in his mansion. But the character of an isolated western town never left Lost Cabin because the one thing Okie didn't have shipped in was his own citizens.

OKIE

J. B. Okie found success in almost everything he did. He had a prosperous sheep business, many thriving mercantile stores, enormous land holdings, and a model town that he had built in the midst of isolation. But those people who knew the man think of these accomplishments as mere sidelights. Their fascination lies in recollections of his personal life.

For example, they remember Okie's uncommon respect for learning. His formal education had ended with high school but he went on from there to teach himself many skills. When he was still in his teens, herding sheep around Lander, he used the long, lonely hours to study French. With just the aid of his French grammar book and dictionary, he so completely mastered the language that he could converse on any subject with a Frenchman whether in Wyoming or on the streets of Paris.¹²¹ Okie once

118. *Ibid.*

119. "A Change in Sentiment," *Natrona Tribune*, January 24, 1901.

120. V. B. Okie, autobiography, p. 28, *op. cit.*

121. Shallenberger, "In Memory," *op. cit.*, p. 3.

jokingly commented on his self-taught French after returning from a trip to Denver where he and his wife had seen Sara Bernhardt on her opening night. He noted to his friends in Casper that the divine Sara used an accent identical with the Lost Cabin variety of French which had been acquired from the study of sardine cans.¹²²

In his later years Okie also taught himself Spanish so that he could converse with his shearherders. He could conduct all his own business in Mexico and had no need for an interpreter when he traveled in Spain and South America.¹²³ When his children were old enough, he paid John Ortiz, the manager of the saloon, to tutor his children in Spanish,¹²⁴ and also brought Henri Boulet, a French tutor, to Lost Cabin for one summer.¹²⁵ Not all of the children matched their father's proficiency, but Van, the third oldest boy, found a special incentive to master Spanish. His sudden interest was spurred during a vacation the family took in Havana, Cuba. Okie, who wanted to give young Van a chance to use his Spanish, asked him to go down to the desk clerk and order him a hot bath. Shortly afterwards, the Cuban police came to the hotel room and arrested an astonished father. When the whole situation was straightened out, they found that Van had told the desk clerk, "This man is hot stuff!" Back in Lost Cabin Okie enjoyed telling the story around town, which embarrassed Van so much that he became absolutely determined to learn Spanish well.¹²⁶

Okie's extensive library became the center of his leisure hour studies. Here he studied law from Blackstone¹²⁷ so that he was able to advise the whole community on legal problems.¹²⁸ In addition, after studying civil engineering on his own, he later passed the state examination entitling him to practice as a civil engineer.¹²⁹ Here he also read history, literature, geology and ornithology.¹³⁰ Okie encouraged his children to read good literature and chose famous passages for them to memorize. Van remembers having to learn as a boy Hamlet's soliloquy and Polonius' advice to his son.¹³¹

The education of the Okie children reflected their father's love of learning. After a few years of public education at the little

122. *Natrona Tribune*, February 14, 1901.

123. Shallenberger, "In Memory," *op. cit.*, p. 3.

124. V. G. Okie, autobiography, *op. cit.*, p. 15.

125. *Ibid.*, p. 28.

126. *Ibid.*, p. 18.

127. Kathryn Hammons, "J. B. Okie; Pioneer Sheepman," (unpublished manuscript), p. 8.

128. Shallenberger, "In Memory," *op. cit.*, p. 4.

129. *National Cyclopaedia of American Biography*, 1927, XVII, p. 325.

130. Hammons, "Pioneer Sheepman," *op. cit.*, p. 8.

131. V. G. Okie, autobiography, *op. cit.*, p. 18.

school in Lost Cabin, each of the children in turn attended boarding schools.¹³² The oldest son, John B. Okie, Jr., or "Jack," later graduated from the Naval Academy at Annapolis as a structural engineer. Howard and Van both graduated from Culver Military Academy, after which Van went on to attend college in Baltimore and the Sorbonne in Paris. The three girls, St. Claire, Jeannette, and Mary, attended finishing schools. St. Claire later continued her education, taking a degree at St. Mary's of Notre Dame.¹³³

Several people who knew J. B. Okie mentioned that he was the smartest man they ever knew.¹³⁴ The people of Lost Cabin had watched him become a rich man as they all struggled along. They saw him educate himself to a level few early pioneers ever reached. When they asked his advice, they could expect an immediate and usually accurate response which increased their respect for him. They came to rely on J. B. Okie because they trusted him and were convinced he was a smart man. Colonel Barrie, an eccentric sheep rancher from Bridger Creek who claimed South America as his place of origin, always called Okie "Holy Father" because everyone turned to him like a flock to a priest.¹³⁵ Barrie would tell the people rather scornfully:

If this man was taken from your community the rest of you would perish. You would starve to death. When you are hungry you go to his store to buy your food and you never have the cash to pay for it. You get your clothing in the same way. If you wish to borrow money he is the banker who loans it to you. If you are in need of legal advice you draw on his knowledge of the law. If you have land trouble you go into his office and ask him to prepare the affidavits that will satisfy and conciliate the General Land Office at Washington. Even when you have domestic troubles, and the divorce courts loom up before you, you go and ask him to show you a way out of your perplexities. If you want to learn the day of the week or how to spell a word, you go to the telephone and call up J. B. Okie.¹³⁶

This description was hardly an exaggeration. The people of Lost Cabin greatly respected and relied on J. B. Okie's intelligence.

Old-timers also recall vividly the mansion that Okie built in the middle of the wilderness. In 1900 Okie decided that his family had outgrown the rambling log house they had lived in for fourteen years and made plans to build a mansion in Lost Cabin. The idea had been brewing in his mind ever since he had written a poem called "My Castle Among the Hills."¹³⁷ A few years after that, he had planted roundleaf cottonwood trees on three sides of

132. *Ibid.*, p. 6.

133. Hammons, "Pioneer Sheepman," *op. cit.*, p. 9.

134. Hugh S. Day, personal interview in Riverton, February, 1972; Lewis, "J. B. Okie," *op. cit.*

135. V. G. Okie, autobiography, *op. cit.*, pp. 19-20.

136. Shallenberger, "In Memory," *op. cit.*, p. 4.

137. V. G. Okie, autobiography, *op. cit.*, p. 8.

a six acre quadrangle overlooking Badwater Creek.¹³⁸ The spot was ready, and definite plans began to take shape. Okie visited several mansions in the state to get some idea of what kind of architecture he liked. In the spring of 1900 he went out to look over B. B. Brooks' new house which was in the modern style.¹³⁹ He finally hired a man named Philpott from Omaha to draw up the plans for construction and to act as superintendent of the work.¹⁴⁰

Construction began late in the spring of 1900. Okie brought the saw mill to the Owl Creek Mountains where the sawing of lumber for the new house commenced.¹⁴¹ W. H. Mvering, who had accepted the job of stone mason and contractor for the building,¹⁴² selected a site on a ridge three miles from Lost Cabin as his source for stone. Here the men began to carve out huge two-foot squares of beautiful creamy-red sandstone for use on the first story and in the foundation. Around three sides of the house they built a wide veranda using sandstone pillars to support the roof. As the carpenters started working on the second story framework, the structure took on a new proportion that astounded the Indians who passed through town. They marveled at the "big tepee" being built by the white man and the name stuck. The house was thereafter called the "Big Tepee" by everyone.¹⁴³

Okie's sixteen-room mansion was considered one of the finest homes in the state during the early years of this century.¹⁴⁴ The architecture of the house was quite modern for the day. With the advent of the 1893 World's Fair in Chicago and its totally different approach to architectural style, America had relinquished its fascination with the Romanesque style of heavy arches and stone work. The Fair revived the classical old-world ideas of architecture, a reversion which Frank Lloyd Wright considered a great relapse and a blight on progress.¹⁴⁵ Wright obstinately continued on his own path towards "organic architecture," architecture that grew from the land and belonged to the land. Okie's home came during this period of artistic turbulence often referred to as the eclectic period. Philpott, the architect of the Big Tepee, had almost certainly seen Frank Lloyd Wright's work, judging just by the Okie house. The hipped roof and the predominant use of horizontal lines so characteristic of Wright's prairie houses are very evident, if less skillfully executed, in the Big Tepee. Philpott used

138. V. G. Okie, story of J. B. Okie, *op. cit.*

139. *Natrona Tribune*, March 8, 1900.

140. *The Clipper*, January 18, 1901.

141. V. G. Okie, autobiography, *op. cit.*, p. 9.

142. *The Clipper*, January 18, 1901.

143. V. G. Okie, autobiography, *op. cit.*, p. 9.

144. *Windriver Mountaineer*, July 19, 1907.

145. Frank Lloyd Wright, *A Testament*. (New York: Bramhall House, 1957), pp. 81, 37, 33.

the veranda roof and the veranda itself as strong horizontal forces, paralleling the line of the main roof yet extending beyond the limit of the main roof very much as Wright did with his main floors. The subsequent addition of windows closing in the veranda increased the appearance of the Wright influence because of the narrow parallel panes. Perhaps Philpott had seen Wright's design for "A House in a Prairie Town" which appeared in *Ladies' Home Journal* in 1900. That design had the extended first floor horizontal roof, paralleling the main roof and also the narrow parallel windows.¹⁴⁶ Had Wright known about Okie's use of native stone quarried on the property, he would have applauded because he always preached that every house should be a part of the land on which it is built. The Big Tepee was a very early attempt to make a Wyoming house fit in with the terrain.¹⁴⁷

The architecture of the Big Tepee, however, is not purely modern. The use of the heavy stone, although "organic" as Wright would have it, is still a carry-over from the romantic style of H. H. Richardson and the Romanesque. The octagonal turret that projects above the northeast corner of the roof is likewise such a carry-over. The stone is almost hidden now by the closed-in veranda; but the turret, always in plain view, rudely breaks the horizontal theme of the rest of the house and proclaims itself independent. The turret may well have been Okie's own idea because it alone seems to detract from the unity of the plan. Having previously created a mental image of his "Castle Among the Hills," Okie may well have imposed his dreams upon his architect and insisted on a tower from which he could view his empire. In spite of its turret, the Big Tepee reflected a modern style of architecture from the Wright school, at that time still very new and very controversial. (See page 184, *Annals of Wyoming*, Fall, 1974, Part I of "J. B. Okie," for a photograph of the Okie Mansion.)

When the finer work began on the inside of the house, freight wagons brought in wood that had been shipped from the east by rail as far as Casper. The wagons contained oak for the floors, elegant carved fireplaces for each room, and imported moldings for the walls and ceilings. The vestibule was lined with tooled leather and the other rooms papered with wallpaper brought from Europe.¹⁴⁸ Okie's master bedroom had its own huge white tile bath.¹⁴⁹ The Big Tepee was one of the early houses in Wyoming to have modern plumbing on two floors. The running water was

146. *Ibid.*, p. 41.

147. Peter R. Hanson, Division of Architectural Engineering, University of Wyoming, personal interview, April, 1972.

148. Mary Helen Hendry, "The Big Tepee," *Casper Star-Tribune*, March, 1967.

149. Mrs. A. D. Macfarlane, personal interview in Casper, Wyoming, June, 1971.

supplied by the gravity system from a large tank at the top of the house. Okie also had steam heat installed.¹⁵⁰

When the mansion was completed in 1901, J. B. Okie and Jeannette filled their home with exotic furnishings from around the world. The formal rooms were lighted by carbide chandeliers of coordinated designs, and the vestibule was lighted by a Spanish lantern set with stained glass. The Okies bought rugs and tapestries in Persia, India, and China, hand-carved teakwood tables in the Orient, and silver and linen in England and Ireland and brought them back to their Big Tepee. On the walls they hung oil paintings done by noted artists of the day, hand-carved ivory plaques, and intricate pictures embroidered with silk thread.¹⁵¹

The Okies also put much effort into turning their dry sagebrush yard into a beautifully groomed lawn. In addition to his cottonwood trees, Okie transplanted spruce trees from the mountains and set out weeping willows for shade.¹⁵² He hired full-time gardeners to care for the lawn and the many varieties of flowers that bloomed there. At the side of the house, Okie built one of the first greenhouses in Wyoming. The glass had to be shipped by rail from Omaha and by freight wagon for eighty-five miles from Casper. But once it was built, the Okies enjoyed fresh flowers the year round,¹⁵³ and the Lost Cabin people saw exotic blossoms that few Wyoming settlers could even imagine. The gardeners could start flowers in the greenhouse during the winter, transplant them to the yard in the spring, so that some kind of flower was always blooming in the yard throughout the summer.¹⁵⁴ Around his six-acre lawn Okie had an intricate fence of cast concrete constructed that was the most modern feature of the Big Tepee's design. A fairly recent innovation in construction technique, the use of cast concrete is still considered difficult. Anyone acquainted the slow development of this technique would have been greatly surprised to see the fence in Lost Cabin, Wyoming, so early.¹⁵⁵ Near the end of the fence stately wrought iron gates marked the entrance to the winding carriage road that led guests to the door of the Big Tepee. As they approached the house, visitors would receive an aloof welcome from the peacocks that strutted among the flowers and hedges.¹⁵⁶ Around 1914 Okie built an aviary in one corner of the yard where he housed one of the largest collections of exotic

150. *The Clipper*, January 18, 1901.

151. Hammons, "Pioneer Sheepman," *op. cit.*, p. 7, and *Casper Tribune-Herald*, June 8, 1945.

152. V. G. Okie, autobiography, *op. cit.*, p. 9.

153. Shallenberger, "In Memory," *op. cit.*, p. 6.

154. Hendry, "Big Tepee," *op. cit.*

155. Hanson interview, *op. cit.*

156. Hendry, "Big Tepee," *op. cit.*

birds in America.¹⁵⁷ He purchased the birds from General Palmer's estate in Colorado Springs¹⁵⁸ and brought them to Lost Cabin where they thrilled both children and adults for many years. There children whose only experience had been in the dry hills around Badwater Creek could suddenly walk into a jungle of unknown plants, curious smells, and the wild screamings and chatterings of tropical birds. Colorful cocatoos, birds of paradise, and macaws would be swinging on intricate perches suspended from the high domed ceilings. That whole exciting sense experience is still vivid to some who saw it over fifty years ago.¹⁵⁹

After the Big Teepee was completed, its doors were always open to the people of Lost Cabin.¹⁶⁰ The first of many big parties there was a housewarming. People came from sixty miles around to see the wonderful house everyone had been talking about.¹⁶¹ Okie took pride in showing to anyone who was curious his flush toilets, carbide lights, and all the modern conveniences in the house.¹⁶² More than likely at that first party people were more interested in seeing a toilet flush than in dancing. The housewarming lasted all night, as did all community dances, so people stayed for breakfast before starting the drive home. When all the guests had gone and all the debris had been cleared away, the Okies found that the polished oak floor was so scarred by dancing boot heels that it had to be scraped and refinished. The rooms that had so proudly displayed imported wallpaper all had to be repapered in the corners because of the tobacco juice spat there. But no one seemed to mind especially, because the housewarming had been a real event.¹⁶³

The Okies loved to travel and did so from the very early days of their marriage. Jeannette and J. B. took a pack trip through Yellowstone Park in 1891 with their friend John Day.¹⁶⁴ Because the park was less than twenty years old then, what they saw was somewhat different from what the modern motorist sees in his hurried drive through today. The road system in the park being incomplete then, they probably entered either through Two Ocean Pass and up the Yellowstone River on a bridle trail, or they entered

157. Hammons, "Pioneer Sheepman," *op. cit.*, p. 7.

158. Kathryn Hammons, personal letter.

159. J. David Love, U. S. Geological Survey, personal interviews in Laramie, Wyoming, 1971 and 1972.

160. Day interview, *op. cit.*

161. V. G. Okie, autobiography, *op. cit.*, p. 9.

162. Day interview, *op. cit.*

163. V. G. Okie, autobiography, *op. cit.*, p. 9.

164. *Natrona Tribune*, August 19, 1891. Van Okie places this trip in 1895 in the outline he made of his autobiography. His early dates are often inaccurate and therefore the newspaper mention of Mrs. Okie's pleasure trip through the national park is taken as the authentic trip made by all three.

from the present south entrance which was then simply called Sheridan's 1882 route. They had only dirt stage roads or pack trails to follow. One of the roads they undoubtedly traveled wound around the south edge of Shoshoni Lake, connecting Old Faithful and West Thumb, and crossed the often treacherous Moose Creek and Lewis River.¹⁶⁵ A hotel was then located on the south bank of Shoshoni Lake. Both the road and hotel were abandoned within a year or two after the Okies' visit, probably because of the difficulties with the dangerous fords. There were six other hotels in the park at that time and an efficient stage coach system to take people on guided tours. Even in 1891 tourists tried to time their visits to avoid the "crowds."¹⁶⁶ The Okies spent a month on their Yellowstone trip, camping out all along the way. On the trip home Okie shot an elk in Jackson Hole and brought the antlers back to hang over the fireplace in the cabin.¹⁶⁷

Once the Okies were well established financially, they began to travel more extensively. They had made trips to both seacoasts in the early years of their marriage, visiting relatives in San Francisco, Washington, D. C., and New York City. In 1898 they spent several months in Mexico and California. Okie, who had brought back several Mexican dollars as souvenirs, joked with his politically-minded friends that the dollars were worth \$.47½ to the poor man and \$.48½ to the capitalist in Mexico, the free silver country.¹⁶⁸ By the spring of 1899 Jeannette and J. B. were ready to expand their horizons, so they left their six children on Long Island with Okie's mother and made a tour of Europe. Then followed several years when J. B. Okie was tied down by several court suits. By 1904, circumstances having freed him again, he took a month-long tour of Central America, strangely enough, without his family.¹⁶⁹ That he had met Clarice just shortly before this trip may be mere coincidence, but her family did live in Guatemala.¹⁷⁰ Four years later she would be his wife, and with her, Okie traveled throughout Europe and Asia. When he became interested in aviation, he was not satisfied until he had seen Europe by air.¹⁷¹ The Lost Cabin people had good reason to look at J. B. Okie with awe; he traveled to places they had only heard of. On a whim he could board his plane at the little landing strip in Lost Cabin¹⁷² and fly

165. A. B. Guptill, *Practical Guide to Yellowstone National Park*. (St. Paul, Minnesota: F. Jay Haynes & Bro., 1890), p. 90.

166. *Ibid.*, p. 9.

167. V. G. Okie, story of J. B. Okie, *op. cit.*, p. 7.

168. *Natrona Tribune*, March 10, 1898.

169. *Natrona County Tribune*, March 3, 1904.

170. Jensen interview, *op. cit.*

171. *Thremopolis Independent Record*, November 14, 1930.

172. *Shoshoni Enterprise*, December 9, 1927.

off to some exotic-sounding place like Mexico City.¹⁷³ But he always came back with stories of his travels, and like any common sheepman, he would stand around in the general store sharing them with his friends.¹⁷⁴

Okie's scholarly intelligence and business sense, his elegant mansion and gardens, his world travels, all these fascinating aspects of his personal life the people in central Wyoming readily recall. They cannot agree, however, on something as basic as what J. B. Okie looked like. He has been described as dark-eyed, tall and curly-haired by some,¹⁷⁵ while others remember him as being tall and blond with a Boston accent.¹⁷⁶ One newspaper article shows a drawing of Okie with a black beard and mustache, a slouch hat and very seedy in appearance.¹⁷⁷ Still others claim that he was blue-eyed, about five feet, nine inches tall with a blond mustache and almost totally bald.¹⁷⁸ Okie's pictures verify this last description.

The abstract qualities of Okie's personality are subject to emotional interpretation because each person saw Okie through his own experience.¹⁷⁹ And as with everyone, Okie's character changed throughout his life. Therefore, those who knew him as a young man and those who knew him only as an old man saw him differently. He has been called an infinitely patient man and a very impatient man. Some say he was a cold, hard, calculating businessman who had no real, close friends, while others contend that he "had a heart as big as an ox" and showed real concern for other people. Okie has been called dignified, aristocratic and reserved. But others remember that he loved a good laugh, liked to be the center of attention, often acted very silly when he danced at parties, and was quite a charming, dashing fellow. Still others remember a raspy disposition, a cynical, sarcastic attitude toward life, an arrogance that prompted him to speak of "the natives" and to call everyone "my man." If a few people remember that he had many enemies, an opposing few believe that everyone respected him, his only enemies being those who resented his favors.

173. *Casper Daily Tribune*, November 7, 1930.

174. V. G. Okie, autobiography, *op. cit.*, p. 18.

175. Hammons, "Pioneer Sheepman," *op. cit.*, pp. 2, 4.

176. Mrs. Alta Barnes, personal interview in Casper, Wyoming, June, 1971.

177. Mary Helen Hendry, "A Thorough Man and a Shrewd One," *Casper Star-Tribune*, March, 1968, p. 37.

178. Day interview and MacFarland interview, *op. cit.*

179. The following descriptions of Okie's character are not individually footnoted. I appreciate very much the openness of these people who offered their opinions on this very personal matter, and I do not wish to cause them any embarrassment. I therefore footnote these opinions as a group: anonymous, Valentino Baima, Mrs. Alta Barnes, David Baskett, Hugh S. Day, June Forsley, Mary Helen Hendry, Henry Jensen, Mrs. A. D. MacFarland, Van Okie, Mrs. Donald Robson, Percy Shallenberger.

Okie's willingness to work hard, to get down and dig ditches with his own hands, impressed more than one old-time resident. Others, however, remembered him as a man who used his brain rather than his hands. The character of J. B. Okie lies somewhere between these poles of opinion, but where exact point never has been and never will be determined. Perhaps the best description of the man must be a simple one such as that made by Lost Cabin's eccentric Colonel Barrie years ago. In 1902 he was on the witness stand testifying in the Kasshan murder trial. The attorney asked this wily South African, "Are you in any way related to J. B. Okie?"

"Yes, Suh, yes Suh," he replied much to everyone's surprise.

"In what way are you related to him?" asked the attorney.

"Ah'm related to him, Suh, as a house cat is related to a Royal Bengal tighuh."¹⁸⁰

CONCLUSION

Forty-two years have passed since J. B. Okie left the Big Teepee to go duck hunting by the reservoir. After his death the people of central Wyoming did not forget him, but memories of him did begin that gradual transformation that comes with the passing of time. Anyone curious about who he was need only ask around in Casper, and he will be amazed at the number of people, young and old, who have some recollection or some story to tell about J. B. Okie. Few other sheep ranchers in the state could claim such a following. The stories have passed through so many tellings that they may someday qualify as local legends. They are very close to doing so already. While many of them cannot be authenticated after so many years, they are still popularly thought to be historical. Some of them, when closely researched, prove to be untrue. As the years continue to blur the facts, the story of J. B. Okie becomes more and more intriguing. The fact that some of it is mere legend, however, does not disqualify it as a part of the whole picture of Okie. A man of common character would not have generated such a myriad of fascinating tales.

The more commonly known stories have already appeared in the text of this paper. Many variations of them were not mentioned. For example, some people believe that Okie brought a man named Dr. Jewell to Lost Cabin to lure Jeannette away. Others remember that he brought Dr. Cox. Some say he brought one, then the other. Still others have heard that Okie, resenting the attention his wife gave to Dr. Jewell, had hired a gunman to kill the Shoshoni physician. Ironically, the gunman supposedly killed Jewell's identical twin by mistake. The story incorporates

180. V. G. Okie, autobiography, *op. cit.*, p. 20.

the mysterious shooting of a man named Scott Jewell which actually did occur in Shoshoni.¹⁸¹ This is just one of several examples of how the stories about Okie have grown, like a Japanese Bonsai tree, in every direction.

Some of the authentic stories have gained great embellishments in many tellings. People remember that the government sued Okie for land fraud, but the story has changed somewhat with the passing of a few years. Now one may hear that Okie was so well read in law that he acted as his own lawyer and was able to make fools of all the government witnesses. One version states that the investigator studied Okie for twenty years. Then when the case came to court, the defense lawyer asked for equal time to prepare his case. The judge supposedly granted it, but Okie died within nine years. Some believe the scandal of the suit caused him to flee to Mexico to escape prosecution.

Both the fabricated stories and the embellished stories can be a clue to that part of Okie's character that straight historical fact can never recreate. Okie's life story needs to be "demythologized" in the sense that modern theologians use the term. In other words, the facts should be kept clearly in mind, but the meaning of the legends must be studied as well. All the tales told about Okie cannot be taken as fact, but on the other hand, they must not be dismissed as mere fiction. They point to a most unusual man who accomplished extraordinary things under unusual circumstances. In their exaggerated way, they show Okie the intelligent, passionate, proud, and ambitious man.

Besides reading Okie's character between the lines of the semi-legends, clues also appear in the attitudes of those who remember him. Time after time, they would ask that certain stories not be printed, or that nothing bad be printed. After recounting several tales of Okie's intrigues, the old-timers would always end with a reverse approach, trying to emphasize all the good he did. This desire to protect Okie's name despite what they believed to be the facts, shows the great respect these people had for the man, regardless of his underhanded dealings.

Is Okie's story, then, worth retelling? Some historians would respond with an unconditional "No," calling it local history or an insignificant part of the nation's history; but to the people of Wyoming, he was part of *their* history. To be sure, none of them would suffer greatly if they never heard of Okie again, but the same could be said of never reading another good novel. All either of them do is make life more enjoyable. If a book interests you, it is worth reading. If Okie's story interests the people of Wyoming, it is worth retelling.

181. Facts disprove this version. Dr. Jewell was already married in 1905 and Scott Jewell was still alive in 1908, according to newspaper accounts.

Wyoming State Historical Society

TWENTY-FIRST ANNUAL MEETING

Casper, Wyoming

September 13-15, 1974

Registration for the twenty-first Annual Meeting of the Wyoming State Historical Society began at 1:00 p.m. in the Diamond 4 Room of the Holiday Inn in Casper. Refreshments were served and a pleasant evening was enjoyed.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 14

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m. by the president, Richard Dumbrell, in the Holiday Inn. A letter was read from the Casper Chamber of Commerce welcoming the Wyoming Historical Society to Casper for their Annual Meeting. Following the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag, the president asked the following members to serve on committees: audit, Dave Wasden and Molly Seneshale; resolutions, Jay Brazelton and Henry Jensen; parliamentarian, Dr. T. A. Larson.

CHAPTER REPORTS

Lincoln County (Vic McGinnis). The annual chuck-wagon picnic was held along the Green River. Treks were made to the Big Sandy Crossing and Simpson's Hollow; to Emigrant Springs; and to Fort Bonneville and the Father DeSmet monument.

Hot Springs County (Etta Payne). A trek was made to Bates Battlefield. Several other groups were invited and a total of 82 people and 21 cars participated in visiting this site where the Bates battle was fought 100 years ago on July 4, 1874.

Goshen County (Arden E. Browning). The Chapter tried unsuccessfully to save the Rawhide Buttes Stage Station. They have been successful in acquiring a museum. The Union Pacific donated the old depot to the Chapter to be used as a museum.

Fremont County (Norbert Ribble). Records are being assembled on rural cemeteries in the county. Members are taping the voices of many of their old-timers and donating time to the Lander museum, and they went on a trek to South Pass City and Atlantic City.

Campbell County. Main activities have been concerned with the new Rockpile Museum which was opened to the public July 21, 1974. A tea at the dedication ceremonies, a \$500 contribution, and the cleaning and arranging of displays for the opening were some of the projects for the museum. The Chapter sponsored a

booth at the fair depicting history through clothing entitled, "From Belly Bands to Bikinis."

Big Horn County (Wilma Johnson). Three meetings were held. The reburial of Jeremiah John "Liver Eating" Johnston was a big project. The Chapter is active in the Big Horn Forest project.

Albany County (Burton Marston). Seven interesting and informative meetings were held this year. Work with the Laramie Plains Museum has continued and the Chapter, in cooperation with the University of Wyoming, the Kiwanis Club and the Laramie Westerners, sponsored the Annual Ranch Tour.

Johnson County (Bill Holland). Regular meetings have been held. At one meeting Glenn Sweem discussed pictograms and another was concerned with collecting and writing histories of brands. Two treks were held. The first was to the Lime Kiln and the second to the archaeological diggings near Hyattville.

Washakie County (Roy Pendergraft). The Jaycees are circulating a petition to assist in establishing a museum district for the county (excluding the Ten Sleep area which hopes to establish its own district). The Chapter participated in the trek to Bates Battlefield and is working on the Big Horn Forest project.

Uinta County (Russell Varineau). A melodrama was produced for the Fort Bridger Rendezvous and other special occasions. Costumed volunteers guided over 800 students through the Fort this year. Members have assisted in keeping the Evanston museum open this year and also initiated a cataloging system at the museum.

Teton County (Jay Brazelton). A fascinating slide program of past (1872) and present (1972) scenes of Yellowstone Park was a highlight of the year. An old-timer was interviewed each month. A storeroom at the Teton County Courthouse has been acquired and will be used for the safekeeping of historical items presented to the Chapter.

Sweetwater County (Molly Seneshale). Treks have been made to the Brady Oil Field and Fort Bridger, and many members went on the historical trail trek. Talks have been on Plains Indians, the Waters of the Green River, Reminiscences of Rock Springs and Green River, pottery making, history of Eden-Farson area, and the Custer Trail in Wyoming. Giving library books in memory of deceased members continues to be a project.

Sheridan County (Glenn Sweem). Work on the Trail End Museum continues to be a big job. Guided tours have been provided. Two treks, one to Fort Kearny and another to Hole-in-the-Wall were held. Members are participating in the Big Horn Forest Committee project.

Platte County. About 85 people attended the annual meeting held at the Diamond Ranch near Wheatland. A paper on the

history of the ranch was given. At another meeting in February the Chapter discussed old buildings in Wheatland that might be suitable for a museum.

Park County (Mae Ballinger). Because of the great amount of publicity, an entertaining report on the Chapter's part in the reburial of Jeremiah John "Liver Eating" Johnston was read. Three large steel files have been acquired to hold memorabilia, tapes of interviews with old-timers are being made, and a dedicatory ceremony for the "Memorial to Early Day Stage Drivers" was held. Two treks, one to the digs at Hyattville and another to ranches on the South Fork of the Shoshone were held.

Laramie County. This is a large chapter and most of its activities have centered around providing interesting programs for their monthly meetings.

Natrona County (Kathleen Hemry). Many interesting programs have been given: pictures of the Oregon Trail; movies of the Cole Creek Disaster; a moving program on the life of Lincoln; on Easter Island at a meeting with the Archaeological Society; with Richard Dumbrill, state president; a show and tell meeting, and much work on planning the State Meeting.

Weston County (Mary Capps). Much work resulted in a most successful State Trek along the Wyoming portion of Custer's 1874 venture into the Black Hills. Over 150 people participated. Dr. Frison spoke on buffalo jumps and at another meeting, Dr. Grees discussed the geology of the Black Hills. Plans are progressing to equip some mini-museums for school children in the county.

Following luncheon, Larry Osborne, a high school history teacher from Riverton was introduced and he, in turn, introduced the five officers of the Riverton High School History Club who were attending the meeting.

The business meeting was called to order by President Richard Dumbrill. It was moved by Norbert Ribble that the reading of the minutes of the 1973 Annual Meeting be dispensed with. The motion was seconded and carried.

The treasurer read the following report. Richard Dumbrill moved that it be accepted. The motion was seconded and carried.

Treasurer's Report

September 7, 1973 - September 12, 1974

Operating Funds	
Cash on hand, September 7, 1973	\$ 1,089.25
Receipts	
Dues	\$ 5,229.00
Pinettes	10.00
	<hr/>
	5,239.00

Disbursements

Annals of Wyoming		3,500.00	
Annual Meeting		225.00	
Awards			
Scholarships	\$ 200.00		
Grants-in-Aid	300.00		
Junior Awards	40.00	540.00	
Officer's Expenses			
President	65.00		
Others	175.00	240.00	
Office Expense			
Printing	6.74		
Phone	1.05	7.79	
Postage			
Publications	472.73		
Correspondence	10.40	483.13	
Bond for Secretary		5.00	
Incorporation Fee		1.00	
Current Balance, September 12, 1974			1,326.33
Invested Funds			
Account	Balance Sept. 7, 1973	Deposits	Balance Sept. 12, 1974
Federal Bldg. & Loan # 661	1,464.92	78.92	1,543.84
Cheyenne Federal Savings & Loan # 32180	1,201.16	64.73	1,265.89
Federal Bldg. & Loan # 3928 (Memorial)	608.80	57.79	666.59
Capitol Savings & Loan - Cert. 860559	8,014.38	495.52	8,509.90
Federal Bldg. & Loan - Cert. C4 696	2,099.35	124.20	2,223.55
Totals	13,388.61	821.16	14,209.77
Total Operating and Invested Funds			<u>\$15,536.10</u>

Membership Report

668 single memberships

245 joint memberships

76 life memberships (12 joint - 64 single)

989 Total memberships representing 1,246 individuals

We have also received during the year:

for 1973 - 21 single and 3 joint

for 1975 - 6 single and 1 joint

for 1976 - 1 single

Committee Reports

Awards Committee Jay Brazelton, 2nd vice president and awards chairman, presented the new awards manual which his committee has revised and updated. Junior awards have been changed from \$25, \$15, and \$10 to \$50, \$35 and \$25. The booklet is smaller than formerly. A new area of competition, audio-video, has been added and there is now one place to file and one deadline date for all.

Projects Committee Henry Jensen, 1st vice president and projects chairman, reported on six projects:

1. The Mountain Man Trails project is being conducted by the government. However, they may seek coordination from the Historical Society in the future.
2. Regarding the Oregon Trail Ruts, there is a possibility that it may be possible to trade some land with the current owner, Bill McIntosh, if the State of Wyoming will cooperate. This would insure preservation of the ruts.
3. We are trying to have Crook's Gap Stage Station put on the National Register and have the title assigned to the State of Wyoming.
4. The Big Horn National Forest Project. A complete report on this later.
5. A marker has been placed on the Bridger Road where it crosses Route 226.
6. The 1975 Trek will be the beginning of a three-year trek from Rawlins to Red Lodge, Montana, over the trail on which supplies were carried from the U. P. Railroad to the gold mining camps in Montana. In 1975 we will go from Rawlins to near Lander, in 1976 from Lander (Camp Brown) to the Frost Ranch near Cody, and in 1977 from Ralston to Red Lodge, Montana.

Big Horn Forest Committee Glenn Sweem, chairman, reported on "Re-discovering the Big Horns," a proposed Bicentennial project conceived by members of the Wyoming State Historical Society Chapters of Big Horn, Johnson, Sheridan, and Washakie Counties, and the Bighorn National Forest Service to make people of Wyoming and America aware of their heritage and environment.

In keeping with the theme "Heritage '76," the project encompasses activities of the past, activities for '76, and projected future activities in Century III, by utilizing the unpublished manuscript and photographs compiled in 1900 by Professor J. G. Jack of Harvard University entitled "Forest and Grazing Conditions in the Bighorn Forest Reserve." With the use of Professor Jack's photographs and manuscript the project can determine the changes in our habitat and environment since 1900, what it is now, and what the future can be.

The project proposal is to locate the exact spot Professor Jack took his photographs in the Big Horn Mountains in 1900 and to re-photograph the same scenes in 1975 for a comparison of changes which have taken place over the past seventy-five years. The 1900 photos and the 1975 photos with a description of the changes noted will be compiled in a booklet and published for sale during the Bicentennial year.

"Re-discovering the Bighorns" Bicentennial project would be an examination of the impact our society has had upon our natural habitat the past 75 years and would establish criteria for a continued examination and comparison in Century III.

The State Historical Society has given \$1000 to be used for this project. Officers of the Big Horn Forest Committee are: president, Glen Sweem; vice president, Ray Pendergraft; secretary, Wilma Johnson; treasurer, Jane Houston.

Auditing Committee The president read the report of the auditing committee which stated, "We have examined the financial records of the Wyoming State Historical Society for the period from September 6, 1973, to September 13, 1974, and find same to be in order." The report was signed by David J. Wasden and Molly Seneshale.

Scholarship Committee Dr. T. A. Larson reported that the Historical Society offers grants to persons for writing histories of Wyoming counties. Each award amounts to \$500, of which \$200 is paid at the beginning of the project and \$300 at completion. Three persons who have received initial payments are now working on such county histories: Dorothy Milek, Hot Springs County; Robert Murray, Johnson County; Guy L. Peterson, Converse County.

The State Society also offers grants-in-aid for other research-and-writing projects. Each grant-in-aid amounts to \$300 of which \$100 is paid at the outset and \$200 at completion. Last fall Richard F. Fleck and Robert A. Campbell completed their project which entailed the preparation of "A Selective Literary Bibliography of Wyoming." Their bibliography, 38 pages in length, was published in the Spring, 1974, issue of *Annals of Wyoming*.

Initial payments have been made for three other grant-in-aid projects: to Gordon Chappell for a study of relations between the Union Pacific and U. S. Army in southern Wyoming; to Michael Lewellyn for a study of the political career of John B. Kendrick; and to Geoffrey Hunt, who is studying the role of our many small museums in the interpretation of Wyoming history.

Foundation Fund

The meeting of the Wyoming State Historical Society was recessed and reconvened as the Wyoming Foundation Fund, Incorporated. Ed Billie reported a balance of \$9,088.40. They are still

planning for a film of the history of Wyoming. Plans are that it will consist of 150 scenes and there will be a panel of five persons to approve each scene. Bob Murray said the cost might be \$3000 a minute. Mr. Billie turned over financial and corporate reports to the treasurer. The meeting of the Foundation Fund was adjourned and that of the Wyoming Historical Society reconvened.

Business Meeting

Russell Varineau suggested the following amendment to the Constitution of the Wyoming State Historical Society. Article III, Membership, of the By Laws shall be amended to read as follows:

Section 1. The organization shall be composed of the State Society county chapters which shall be located in the county seats of each county in the state, and Historical Site Chapters, town or city chapters in any city or town or historical site area of any county. Each chapter will have the responsibility of collecting and preserving the items, documents and records of its own area. Each chapter shall have its own officers and constitution.

Section 2. The following types of membership will be recognized by the State Society: (a) single memberships, (b) joint memberships, (c) single life memberships, (d) joint life memberships, (e) honorary memberships, (f) institutional memberships. Membership in the Society shall be open to all persons or institutions who actively support the State Society and who pay the appropriate dues as set forth in the By Laws of the State Society. It is provided, however, that persons who reside in an area in which there is a duly chartered county, town, or city chapter shall affiliate with the State Society only through memberships in one of the local chapters. Persons residing outside the state or in a county in which no county, city or town chapter has been chartered may affiliate directly with the State Society.

Section 3. Affiliation of chapters shall be by charter to be granted by the Executive Committee of the Society upon application pursuant to rules and regulations.

After discussion, Burton Marston moved that this proposal be referred to the Executive Committee. Motion seconded and carried.

President Richard Dumbrill asked Henry Jensen to preside, and then moved that the Amendment to Article IV, Section 2, which was tabled at the last Annual Meeting be removed from the table. Motion seconded and carried.

Mr. Dumbrill then moved to insert the words, "Except that the Executive Board is authorized to allow additional funds if it feels that said funds are necessary" and "This amendment shall take effect beginning September 14, 1974." Motion seconded and carried.

Richard Dumbrell asked that the following letter from the Archives and Historical Department be attached to the motion:

"Article IV-Section 2—The *Annals of Wyoming*, the historical publication issued by the State Archives and Historical Department, is declared to be the official publication of the Society. The President shall be fully advised by the executive secretary of the Society of all contractual negotiations relative to the publication of the *Annals* as those negotiations proceed. Upon completion of the negotiations the President shall, if he is satisfied that the negotiations have been conducted in a satisfactory manner, authorize the Treasurer to pay into the State Historical Fund that portion of the dues of each member or joint members, not to exceed the sum of \$1.25 per issue, required for the purchase of the periodical (except that the Executive Committee is authorized to allow additional funds if it feels that said funds are necessary). One copy of each issue is to be received by each member of the Society, except that joint membership shall be entitled to only one copy."

Mr. Dumbrell moved the adoption of the following Resolution: Be it Resolved by the Wyoming State Historical Society in its 21st Annual Meeting that it formally approves the proposal of the Archives and Historical Department as set out in its letter of September 12, 1974 attached hereto and made a part hereof.

It is understood that the sum of \$3500 paid for the *Annals* to this date will be all that need be paid under the current budget. Thereafter, if the Legislature approves the proposed budget, the Society will be obligated to pay only postage costs on the *Annals* and the members will receive them at no other expense. Furthermore, the By Laws as amended will then govern the relationship with the understanding that \$1.25 per issue is authorized for *Annals* expense.

Motion seconded and carried. Mr. Dumbrell then returned to the chair and asked Henry Jensen to present a Resolution. Mr. Jensen moved the adoption of the following resolution:

Resolution for 21st Annual Meeting or Wyoming State Society, September 13-15, 1974.

Whereas, spiraling costs of printing and paper have created a financial crisis in the production of the *Annals of Wyoming*, the official publication of the Wyoming State Historical Society, and

Whereas, the Society has, in the past, largely assumed responsibility for these costs but is now faced with the fact that the entire income of the Society is being absorbed by the publication with nothing remaining for either normal functions of the Society or, other worthwhile historic projects, and

Now, Therefore be it resolved that the Wyoming State Historical Society strongly urge the various budget agencies, the Ways and Means Committee, the Legislature, and the Governor approve sufficient funds to continue the publication of the Archives and

Historical Department publications at their present highly respected scholarly level.

Be further resolved that copies of this resolution be sent to all agencies and persons concerned.

Motion seconded and carried.

Those present observed 30 seconds of silence in memory of deceased members of the Wyoming State Historical Society.

New Business

Mrs. Etta Payne of Hot Springs County invited the Society to hold its 1975 meeting in Thermopolis.

Ned Frost reported on the National Trails project in Wyoming. Many agencies, both state and federal, are wanting to record trails in Wyoming—from the time of the Mountain Men through the first decade of this century. So many agencies are involved, each with their own interests, that an impartial group is needed to coordinate their efforts. The Society may be called upon for help in this effort. A full time coordinator would be needed and this would necessitate a budget request from the Archives and Historical Department. The Executive Board will discuss this further. Burton Marston moved that the Society sponsor this project in Wyoming and that the Executive Board be empowered to act in implementing coordination of all those working on this project. Motion seconded and carried.

There being no further business, the 1974 business meeting of the Wyoming State Historical Society was adjourned.

Saturday Workshops

From 10:00 until 11:00 a.m. and from 11:00 until 12:00 workshops were conducted for the members of the Society by personnel from the Historical Research and Publications Division and the State Museum. Each workshop was repeated so that everyone could attend both sessions.

Saturday Luncheon

A delightful luncheon in the Hat Six Room was enjoyed by the members. Miss Carol Stevens, Wyoming Junior Miss, accompanied herself on her guitar as she sang a medley of familiar old songs. Edness Kimball Wilkins introduced Natrona County pioneer, Edna Kukura. Mrs. Kukura told "The Story of Casper Collins—The Battle at Platte Bridge Station." Platte Bridge Station was later named Fort Caspar.

Saturday Banquet

Dining tables were attractively and appropriately decorated for the banquet. Edness Kimball Wilkins gave the invocation recalling

the guiding words of the Holy Bible to: "Destroy not the landmarks which thy forefathers have set."

Mayor Tom Nichols welcomed the group and past presidents of the Society, special guests and officers were introduced. Jay Brazelton, awards chairman, displayed the new awards booklet and announced that copies are now available.

Violet Hord presented President Richard Dumbrell with a hand-painted cup. She also announced that, because of the weather, the Sunday morning breakfast would be held indoors at the Natrona County Fair Grounds.

Mr. Dumbrell introduced Verna (Mrs. A. C.) Keyes, designer of the Wyoming state flag. Following the group recitation of the Wyoming Collect, Mrs. Keyes spoke briefly on the many things Wyoming has meant to her.

The following historical awards were presented by Jay Brazelton:

Junior Historian Awards:

Rickie J. Walsh, Cheyenne. First Place, Senior High School, Wyoming Substitutes for Currency During the Panic of 1907."

Susan Brown, Jackson. Second Place, Senior High School. "Sylvia Irene Hansen."

Ted Mathis, LaGrange. Third Place, Senior High School. "The Life of an Old Time Cowboy."

Grant Shock, Rock Springs. Honorable Mention. Junior High School. "The Gentlemen Outlaw, alias Butch Cassidy."

Teacher Award:

Mrs. Clara Jensen, Casper.

Museum Award:

Norbert G. and Eva M. Ribble. Presented by Fremont County to this couple for their fine work.

Publications:

Wayne R. Breitweiser, Powell. Newspaper column, "Downwind and Across the Coulee."

James L. Ehernberger and Francis G. Gschwind, Cheyenne. Co-authors of the book, *Sherman Hill*.

Annual Services Awards:

Mabel Brown, Newcastle. Outstanding Woman of the Year.

Richard Dumbrell, Newcastle. For the well-planned and conducted Trek #25 on July 13-14, 1974, The Wyoming Portion of the Custer Expedition of 1874 to Explore the Black Hills.

Fine Arts Award:

Bill Matson, Cody. Western Artist

Audio-Video: KTwo-TV, Radio, Casper. For "The Story of Conrad Schwiering, Mountain Painter."

Photographic Award: Earl Pote, Casper.

Cumulative Contribution Award: Betty Wied Hayden, Jackson. For her many contributions including publications, educational activities, and efforts for the preservation of historic sites and buildings.

Henry Jensen proposed a resolution commending and congratulating all those who helped make the 1974 annual meeting a success. Applause bespoke unanimous acceptance of the resolution.

Dr. T. A. Larson announced the results of the election. Officers for 1974-75 are: Henry Jensen, president; Jay Brazelton, first vice president; Russell Varineau, second vice president; Jane Houston, secretary-treasurer.

Dick Dumbrill introduced the new officers and presented the gavel to the president, Henry Jensen.

Bill Bragg, entertainment chairman, introduced the Red Dog Saloon Players, who provided the evening's entertainment. Following a sprightly sale of snake oil, the band and vocalists presented a number of musical selections, "The Gas Lights Vaudeville Show." Culmination of the evening's festivities was a melodrama entitled, "Pure as the Driven Snow" or "A Working Girl's Secret." A fine time was had by all—audience and players alike!

Sunday Morning

A hearty breakfast was served at the Natrona County Fairgrounds, south of Casper, followed by tours of the Pioneer Museum, Fort Caspar and the Werner Wildlife Museum. At 10:00 a.m. a tour going west visited Speas Spring, the Fish Hatchery, the Stuart Cabin Site, and Independence Rock where Henry Jensen gave a talk. He was also the guide on this tour. Another tour going east visited Reshaw (Richard) Bridge, Deer Creek Stage Station, and heard a talk on Fort Fetterman. Guides for this tour were Tom Nicholas, Joe Keenan and Bill Bragg.

JANE H. HOUSTON
Secretary-Treasurer

Thomas S. Twiss, Indian Agent, Upper Platte to The Honble., The Commissioner of Indian Affairs. Dated Indian Agency of the Upper Platte, April 30th, 1857.

I have had it reported to me, recently, that an order has been received, from the Head Quarters of the Army, directing the Military Commandant to abandon Fort Laramie, & move the troops to Oregon.

On the supposition, that this Report is True, & that Fort Laramie is no longer to be occupied as a Military post in the Indian Country, I respectfully & earnestly request that the Honble. the Secretary of War may be pleased to consider the propriety & advantages of placing the Public Buildings & such Public property, as cannot be removed by the troops, in the safe keeping of the Honble. the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for the use & benefit of the Indian Tribes.

I am informed that it is in contemplation to evacuate the Fort, as early as the 15th July next, & that the troops, at present composing the Garrison, will take the overland route thro' the South Pass to Southern Oregon.

Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Selected Documents Concerning the Administration of Indian Affairs at the Upper Platte Agency. Record Group 75.

J.C.R. Clark, MD, Spl. US Vac Agent to Chas. E. Mix Esqr, Acting Commissioner of Indian Affairs.

Agreeably to your directions I have the honor to submit the following brief report of my operations as Spl. U. S. Vaccinating Agent among the Indians of the Upper Platte Agency.

The diseases most prevalent among the Indians of the Upper Platte, so far as I have been able to observe are of a cutaneous and pulmonary character. *Bangs* seems to be one of the peculiar pathological institutions of the country.

Chronic Catarrhal & Gonorrheal Ophthalmitis is found prevailing to a great extent. Syphilitic infections among the prairie tribes are seldom met with which may readily be accounted for as their intercourse with the Whites is so much more limited than those of other tribes residing contiguous to our people. It is a real and mortifying truth that the Indians readily adopt the vices of the White man and but few, if any, of the virtues.

Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Selected Documents Concerning the Administration of Indian Affairs at the Upper Platte Agency. Record Group 75.

Book Reviews

The Western Odyssey of John Simpson Smith: Frontiersman, Trapper, Trader and Interpreter. By Stan Hoig. (Glendale: The Arthur H. Clark Company, 1974). Index. Illus. 254 pp. \$14.75.

Unlike many of his compatriots from the early frontier days of the American West, John Simpson Smith has not been remembered for the important role that he played in it. The author of this volume argues, however, that Smith's memory deserves better. In fact, says Hoig, Smith "was more involved in the development of the Central Plains between 1830 and 1871 than any other one man." As evidence in support of this claim, Hoig cites Smith's various activities: as one of the early mountain men fur trappers; as a Bent's Fort trader; as a white who lived many years in close proximity to Cheyenne and Arapaho Indians; as a government interpreter to the four major treaties with those tribes between 1851 and 1867; as an advisor to every Indian agent for those tribes during his lifetime; as a witness to most of the major conflicts between Indians of the Central Plains and the white man; as an Army scout and guide; as an escort to three different delegations of chiefs to Washington, D. C., where he interpreted for three different presidents; as a friend and advisor to numerous Cheyenne and Arapaho chiefs, in particular the peacemaker, Black Kettle; as one who played a crucial role in the dialogue between Indians and whites during those crucial days of conflict on the Central Plains.

The author treats Smith in an evenhanded way; he is shown to be completely human — capable of both bravery and practical discretion. Not surprisingly, as Hoig points out, Smith had his enemies—especially "among the second-generation of frontier military, who considered him a bad influence on the Indians, and among the Indian-hating settlers who despised 'squaw men' in general for their association with the Indians."

The American reading public was first introduced to Smith in 1848 by way of Garrard's *Wah-to-Yah and the Taos Trail*. He was also mentioned in the *Encyclopedia Britannica* and his name frequently was found in stories about Indians which appeared in the eastern press. Moreover, various records, diaries, memoirs, official Army and Indian Bureau reports made mention of him. Yet, as the author notes, "Smith died without having a personal account of his life placed on paper." He apparently left no diary nor personal papers—an extremely debilitating handicap for his

biographer. As a result, this is more a skillfully organized and highly readable story of events to which Smith was an observer or participant than it is a story of the man himself.

Wayland College
Plainview, Texas

DONOVAN L. HOFSSOMMER

They Called Him Wild Bill: The Life and Adventures of James Butler Hickok. By Joseph G. Rosa. (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press. 2nd Edition, revised and enlarged, 1974). Index. Illus. 377 pp. \$12.50.

This is not merely a revised edition of Joseph Rosa's masterly and widely acclaimed biography of Hickok; it is also a much larger book, some 100 pages longer than the original, which was published in 1964. One can only hope that it is even more successful than the first edition, for Wild Bill, with the centenary of his death almost upon us, remains the victim of sensation-seeking writers, who would be alarmed to learn that Rosa's long investigations have reduced the number of Hickok's killings to a substantiated seven. Even the mainly admirable Time-Life *The Gunfighters* has an illustrated box caption, clearly not the responsibility of the author of the main text, which includes among other errors the legend that Wild Bill was fired by the city council of Abilene. Yet Rosa conclusively proved in the first edition of his book, listed in the Time-Life bibliography, that this was not the case.

The new edition has a number of particularly interesting additions, not least two hitherto unpublished photos of Hickok made available by his niece. Rosa has at last unearthed the identity of the fatuously named Captain Honesty, who described the crucial card game in Springfield, Missouri, which led to the gunfight with Tutt, and he has found out far more about the Wild West Show at Niagara Falls in which Hickok played a star role, including fascinating details of how it was assembled. There is new evidence that he did not kill the Sioux Whistler, more about his Civil War exploits and new information about McCall, including his pardon file. And the Hickok family has provided letters from "Uncle Jim" and one from Charlie Utter regarding Hickok's reburial.

It should be stressed that Rosa does not try to whitewash his longtime hero, but presents the facts as he has found them. That Hickok emerges as well from such a laser-like examination is to the author's credit as well as his subject's. "The real Wild Bill Hickok remains an enigma, a controversial character," admits Rosa, who has yet managed to present us, not with a hero or villain, but with what Wild Bill so clearly was, a man.

English Westerners' Society
London

ROBIN MAY

Martin Murphy, Jr. California Pioneer 1844-1884. Monograph No. 4, by Sister Gabrielle Sullivan. (Stockton, Calif.: Pacific Center for Western Historical Studies. University of the Pacific, 1974). Index. Illus. 76 pp. \$4.50.

This monograph is an "effort to resolve the paradox between the obvious prominence" of Martin Murphy, Jr., and "the current poverty of materials" concerning this Irish emigrant who became the largest individual landowner in central California. It consists of a brief biography, explanatory footnotes, and eight appendices. The biographical sketch includes limited historical background and traces Murphy's emigration from Ireland to Canada (1828), to Missouri (1842), and to California (1844). The Murphy family accompanied the first emigrant group to cross the Sierra Nevada Mountains into California via the Truckee River route and initially settled in the Sacramento Valley at Rancho de Ernesto eighteen miles from John A. Sutter's fort. The first overt act of rebellion against the Mexican government took place on Murphy's ranch June 10, 1846, when a group of American settlers took the Mexican army horses temporarily quartered in his corral. In 1850 Murphy purchased Pastoria de las Borregas, 4000 acres bordering San Francisco Bay, and moved his family to the Santa Clara Valley. Over the next three decades he became a leader in agriculture and cattle raising in Santa Clara and San Luis Obispo counties, an influential builder of the city of San Jose, and participated in founding the Colleges of Notre Dame and Santa Clara.

Resources for the book include a dictation by Murphy's son Bernard D. which was the basis for his father's biography in Hubert Howe Bancroft's *Chronicles of the Builders of the Commonwealth*, a "trunk" of Murphy family papers, an interview with and letters from family members, newspapers, secondary materials on California and Ireland, and limited primary sources. The "trunk" of papers which the author recovered from the Butterfield and Butterfield auction house in San Francisco contained indentures, copies of land grants and maps, city and county tax receipts, promissory notes, Martin Murphy's certificate of citizenship, and letters received on the Murphy's fiftieth wedding anniversary. Appendix 6 consists of a partial list of these documents and Appendix 7 includes copies of the anniversary correspondence. As these materials appear to be the only important new primary sources, the failure to reproduce them in entirety diminishes the value of the book. Other appendices explain the state historical landmarks placed on Murphy's Cosumnes River ranch and on his estate in Sunnysvale, list Murphy "firsts," and reprint a family chronology, Murphy's will, and a letter to Bancroft concerning that author's biography. A great deal of the information in the appendices and footnotes could have been included in the text which would have improved its quality and readability.

The author diligently gathered data for the book but left undeveloped significant possibilities inherent in the material. Although religious and educational advantages are stressed as motivations for Murphy's changes of residence, the book's sources reveal important economic gains resulting from each move. A more detailed treatment of Murphy's impact on the economic and political development of California would be valuable. Nevertheless, specialists in Western and California history will find interesting information in this work.

LESTA VAN DER WERT TURCHEN

*Dakota Wesleyan University
Mitchell, South Dakota*

Nature's Yellowstone. The Story of an American Wilderness That Became Yellowstone National Park. By Richard A. Bartlett. (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1974). Index. Illus. 250 pp. \$10.

Yellowstone National Park: Its Exploration and Establishment. By Aubrey L. Haines. U. S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service. (Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1974). Illus. 218 pp. \$2.70.

To many visitors the pre-1872 history of Yellowstone, before it became the world's first national park, is as fascinating as its scenery and geysers. The classic on this subject has been *Yellowstone Park* by Hiram Martin Chittenden, park engineer turned historian, whose work first published in 1895 has gone through numerous editions. Chittenden wrote gracefully but his history was a bit skimpy because his research was primitive. The first professional historian to tackle the subject, Merrill D. Beale, with his *Story of Man in Yellowstone*, beefed up the history but his writing was uninspired and he fell several miles short of *the* definitive work.

Now, all of a sudden, we have two new histories of early Yellowstone coming out simultaneously, researched and written by two thoroughgoing professionals whose ambitions and struggles were well known to this reviewer when he served as regional historian for the old Midwest Region, National Park Service. We may never have any *one* definitive history of Yellowstone, from A to Z, because no publisher could survive the escalating cost of production, and few readers could afford to buy. But at last we now have, with these two books taken in conjunction, comprehensive coverage of Yellowstone from John Colter through the Park Establishment Act signed by President Grant. In the future some genius might stumble upon a few esoteric facts that Bartlett and Haines some-

how missed, and then synthesize the whole caboodle in one glorious volume, complete with a wealth of color plates, for say \$50 per volume. Meanwhile we will manage quite nicely with these two somewhat parallel treatises.

Yellowstone enthusiasts will want to acquire both. Fortunately for them their combined cost is still an unusual bargain, thanks to an absurdly low price on the Haines volume. Of course readers of this review will want to know, if these two works are so parallel, how come they should buy both. Well, inevitably when two sharp historians work the same library and archival gold mines their readers will find a lot of duplicated material. Yet the two are not *exactly* parallel, and the differences in data and style are such that they happily reinforce rather than cancel out each other.

Aubrey Haines, now retired and living in Bozeman, was a Yellowstone Park engineer who, finding Colter, Bridger, Washburn, Hayden, Langford and company more exciting than slide rule calculations, emulated Chittenden and became a park historian. (He actually held that title for a few years, the only officially designated "historian" Yellowstone ever had.) Richard Bartlett, history professor at Florida State, Tallahassee, when writing his *Great Surveys of the West*, got hooked on Yellowstone and couldn't sleep till he gave birth to another book. Since Haines was stationed at Yellowstone and Bartlett haunted the place seasons on end they knew of each other's identical goals. In many such delicate situations one of two things usually happen. The rival researchers either decide to collaborate on one work as joint authors, or they become standoffish rival authors suppressing juicy tidbits from each other and racing to see who can go into print first. In this case however, if there was any rivalry it was friendly, the exchange of data was liberal and wholehearted, and the timing of the two publications was purely coincidental.

Both authors deal rather exhaustively with the known or speculative meanderings of the fur traders, the brief incursions of the prospectors, and the episodes of the amateur and official explorers with dawning consciousness of a wonderland that needed special protection. Bartlett turns up with certain minutiae that Haines missed and vice versa, but these are not worth retailing. One of the principal differences is that Bartlett backs up several million years and gives us four preliminary chapters on the geology of the park montane perimeter, geology of the park volcanic plateau interior, the flora and fauna, and the aboriginal wanderers. While it may seem odd that a historian would concern himself with these environmental factors—just as it seems a bit unusual that a Yellowstone book would be published in New Mexico—Bartlett is a facile writer who can arouse reader interest in all things animate or inanimate. (Which way does one classify the horrendous 1959 earthquake?) His raggle-taggle bands of white explorers are awed by this exotic scenery somewhat like the first men on the moon.

Haines was under contract with the National Park Service to search for and come up with all the documentation he could find. In contrast to Bartlett who had more leeway to re-create history in his own words, Haines lets the original documents tell the story as much as possible, but his conscientious and informed way of tying these together by threads of narrative has resulted in a fine readable book, not a mere compendium of quotations.

Bartlett has more illustrations, although not a particularly inspired selection. Except for one choice colorplate by Thomas Moran, Haines limits his illustrations to photo portraits of some latter-day explorers and promoters, coupled with a quite valuable end-set of biographical sketches. Haines has the best of it with maps, in fact the best assembly of historical maps of Yellowstone to date. Bartlett has an illuminating essay on sources but lets the end-notes double as bibliography. Haines has both end-notes and a bibliography which falls just short of being complete.

There is at least one significant source that Bartlett was well aware of and acknowledges, but which Haines somehow missed. That is the monograph by this reviewer, "Behind the Legend of Colter's Hell: The Early Exploration of Yellowstone National Park" *Mississippi Valley Historical Review* (June, 1949). This is significant, not simply because this reviewer wrote it, but because a substantial part of what Bartlett and Haines have come up with re the fur traders—including the discovery of the startling fact that the *real* Colter's Hell was near Cody, *not* inside Yellowstone Park—was researched and written by this reviewer over twenty-five years ago. This same monograph was reprinted in 1958 and sold by the Wyoming Historical Society. Haines does utilize and acknowledge this reviewer's booklet, *Colter's Hell and Jackson's Hole* (Yellowstone Museum Association, 1961) which boiled down the 1949 material.

Between the two writers we learn more than ever before about the involved process by which the idea for a park reservation was born, how it was shepherded through the legislative maze, and why despite all the sticky mixture of self-serving connivance and rosy idealism it became one of the great legal landmarks in conservation history. While neither author can state with finality who first came up with the burst of inspiration, we are surprised to learn that Montana Territorial Governor Meagher—who soon thereafter drowned in the Missouri River—thought of it in 1865, five years before the alleged campfire speech by Cornelius Hedges of the Washburn expedition. And while there may have been many dreamers, there had to be a few hard-core doers to motivate Congress—prominent among which were Northern Pacific Railroad promoters working through Geologist F. V. Hayden, and various Congressional stalwarts who worked hard to defend the visionary concept against the predictable army of skeptics and exploiters.

Finally, both Bartlett and Haines have a second volume each up their sleeves, wherein they deal with Yellowstone's subsequent history. Bartlett points out that Montanans were the ones who "saved Yellowstone." Today, however, Wyoming citizens yield to no one as champions who, recognizing a prime asset when they see one, would preserve incomparable Yellowstone for all the people, including generations yet unborn.

National Park Service
Denver

MERRILL J. MATTES

Sherman Hill. By James L. Ehernberger and Francis G. Gschwind. (Callaway, Nebr.: E&G Publications, 1973). Index. Illus. 128 pp. \$10.95.

Students of railroad history and lovers of trains alike should welcome this jewel-like study of a small but critical segment of Union Pacific Railroad operation. It should be noted that the name Sherman Hill is a typical piece of railroad understatement. Sherman Hill is actually the crest of the northern extension of the Rocky Mountains and rises more than 2000 feet within thirty-five miles to a maximum altitude on the original line of 8247 feet above sea level.

The battle the railroad has waged over Sherman Hill for the last 107 years may well be taken as a microcosm of the first transcontinental railroad's experience throughout its history. It is the railroad's response to this formidable physical adversary that is the theme of this work.

Here the early-day construction crews first encountered serious problems after building 500 miles along the gentle Platte River valley. At either side of the hill rough and ready end-of-track towns grew into Cheyenne and Laramie. Underfinanced, the early-day railroad suffered greatly on Sherman Hill, plagued by blizzards, tortuous grades and lightweight construction. It was also on Sherman Hill that the first of E. H. Harriman's ambitious rebuilding projects began shortly after he gained control of the bankrupt railroad in 1898. And it was here also that the massive "Big Boy" steam locomotives—most powerful ever built—hailed huge amounts of war material during World War II.

Sherman Hill features an unequalled collection of photographs from many sources, including the authors' own collections. Particularly commendable is the quality of their reproduction. In subject matter they range from initial construction to a splendid group showing the building of the third main line in 1952-1953, and include pictures of all the major classes of steam and diesel locomotives the railroad has used over the hill. Appendixes feature progressive track maps drawn especially for this work of

several of the stations involved in Sherman Hill operations and tables of other information.

James L. Ehernberger and Francis G. Gschwind are no strangers to railroad operations or Wyoming. Together they have written at least four previous works on Union Pacific operations. Ehernberger has spent most of his life in Cheyenne in the shadow of Sherman Hill, and most of his working career has been with the railroad he writes about. In *Sherman Hill* Ehernberger and Gschwind have done their best work yet.

Union Pacific Railroad Co.
Omaha

BARRY B. COMBS

Twelve Mormon Homes. Visited in Succession on a Journey Through Utah to Arizona. By Elizabeth Wood Kane. (Salt Lake City: Tanner Trust Fund, University of Utah Library, 1974). Index. Illus. 149 pp. \$12.

Thomas L. Kane of Pennsylvania was an attorney, "a friend of the Mormons," but not a Mormon himself. Kane first became interested in aiding the Mormons in 1846 and made a trip to Utah incognito.

In the winter of 1872-73 he, his wife Elizabeth and two of their four children again visited Utah because of his health. On this trip they went entirely through Utah from Ogden to St. George with Brigham Young and ten others. The first part of their trip was by Utah Southern Railroad which was finished only as far as Lehi. Then they went in a group of carriages.

Elizabeth Kane kept careful journals and diaries and from these and her letters her father put together the story of their trip. These first were published under the same title in 1874 in limited edition.

She makes quite a case of polygamy which disturbed her greatly, yet she saw the women in these homes as serene, calm and at ease with each other. She comments that on every piazza "our hostess stood ready to greet us." The cleanliness and organization of the home was spoken of frequently.

With one exception the homes in which the Kanes were housed were large, spacious and were of a brick which was painted white. She mentioned the walls with their white paint, carved wooden window dressings and corniced roofs looked trim as if fresh from the builders hand.

The women prepared meals and served them with grace and ease, even though in one home the guests had to wait until a band of Indians was fed.

She often put her "foot in her mouth" by referring to a new wife as a daughter or niece of the elder woman in the family. Some of

her experiences are humorous, others are frightening and some of the tales told her of the earlier days were gruesome.

The book is interesting, highly readable and since the author includes many family names of each wife she mentions should be of great value to the genealogists.

For a non-professional writer, Mrs. Kane writes with a conciseness and apt description readers will find enjoyable.

Laramie County Library
Cheyenne

LOUISE FLYNN UNDERHILL

Shoot Me a Biscuit. Stories of Yesteryear's Roundup Cooks. By Dan Moore. (Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 1974). Illus. 172 pp. Paper \$3.95. Cloth \$8.50.

Chuck Wagon Cookin'. By Stella Hughes. (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1974. Index. Illus. 170 pp. \$4.95.

These two books have in common the chuck wagon meals of the old west, the usually ornery cooks who produced them and the hard-working, hungry cowboys who consumed them. Both are written by dyed-in-the-wool westerners with wry and salty humor. Both are good reading, informative and, believe it or not, useful even in this day and age.

Daniel G. Moore, *Shoot Me a Biscuit* author, at age fourteen ran away from his Sedalia, Missouri, farm home and, after a brief tour in a Wild West show, took his first ranch job in New Mexico. From then on he worked for ranches from Texas to Montana until depression and drought broke up many of the big outfits.

Dan started as a lowly cook's helper, and he gives an authentic picture of some outstanding cooks, their chores, utensils and peculiarities, declaring that what most of them had in common was "the temperament of a bear with a sore paw." However, the one thing a cowboy appreciated most and would sacrifice anything for was good food. Knowing this, a cook could be, and was, a tyrant and a dictator.

On a mountain roundup, utensils and supplies were balanced carefully on pack animals. The domain the cook staked out in camp was sacred and his word was law. The same held true in the plains country, but there the chuck wagon was the center of the cook's empire and, as such, spelled home to the cowboy. Furthermore, the camp was placed so that nothing interfered with the cook's activities. Cattle, horses, even cowboys, stayed down wind so no dust drifted into the outdoor kitchen. If "Ole Greasy" decreed, no chaps were worn in the chuck line, though even the cowboys rebelled at one monarch who insisted that they also take off their spurs!

"Camp cooks came in several colors, sizes and degrees of ability . . . many had been cowboys . . . but for various reasons had switched to the less exciting chore of feeding hungry cow servants. Some had been crippled up by tough horses . . . others had grown too old and stiff to stand the gaff any longer."

Good camp cooks took pride in their ability and seldom returned to an outfit too tight-fisted to provide plentiful supplies. Pud Davis, one of the good ones, temporarily fired from the Souder roundup after a drinking spree, was named for his way with a suet pudding called "Bastard-in-a-Sack" since it was boiled in a wrapping of flour sack to hold it together. Then there was "Dutchy", another fine cook lost to a roundup over a strange combination of whiskey, a social visit to San Marcial and a disastrous encounter with a gypsy wagon.

Wyomingites will especially enjoy "Olsen—the greatest cook in Wyoming". When not cooking for roundup crews, Olsen owned a bakery in Big Piney. He was not only a great cook but was unique in many ways. He was extremely good natured; he loved rodeos and collected prize money for bulldogging; he was an asset in emergencies. Once, during a rodeo in town, he rose from a sound sleep, decked two intruders, dragged them outside and returned to his bed, hardly disturbing the rhythm of his snores. "He fed the crew better than any camp cook I'd ever known," Moore states. "The boys liked him and helped him willingly . . . but I shall always remember him serving up such unlikely dishes as fresh green salads, cooked sliced beets, carrots in glazed syrup, fresh strawberry shortcake or blueberry pie—on the cattle ranges of western Wyoming!"

Mr. Moore's stories of the roundups and the cooks he has known make one sorrow with him that "the old time 'tyrant of the pots and pans' has long since faded away into the dust of his wagon and the smoke of his cooking fires."

Stella Hughes dreamed of being a cowgirl on the dry farm in Oklahoma where she spent her first ten years. Cowgirls rode prancing pinto ponies, drove gentle cattle, twirled ropes and rode off into sunsets with handsome cowboys, but, certainly, *never* cooked! After several years and repeated trips to Arizona looking for an honest-to-gosh cowboy, she found and married Mack Hughes. Their first year together was on a cow outfit on the edge of the Navajo Reservation with Stella as cook! However, she had been hooked on old-timey ways of cooking since, some years earlier, she had eaten dried apple pie sweetened with honey, the flaky crust made from rendered bear fat. Right then she started collecting recipes of dutch oven cookery, tales of cowcamp cooks, food lore and home remedies for any ailment under the sun.

Her book is the result of education gained from numerous camp cooks including Apaches, Mexican horsebreakers, old-timers and from pure necessity. She always went along when her husband

trailed a herd of cattle to market, driving cattle all the way and praying each day "that the cook stayed until the drive was over." They hardly ever did, she adds, "and truly, there is no harder job than slinging heavy dutch ovens and preparing meals for eighteen to twenty men over an open fire.

According to Mrs. Hughes, the first chuck wagon was used in 1866 when Oliver Loving and Charles Goodnight, Texas partners, drove two thousand head of mixed stuff over the Horsehead route. With a feminine interest (thank goodness) in detail, she describes this vehicle, agreeing with Mr. Moore that the cook ruled his chuck wagon and cooking area with an iron hand and was usually "nasty-tempered, irritable, petulant and 'tetchy' as hell". He was also the highest paid man on the drive except the boss—and earned every penny. She defends these cranky creatures, saying, "It was all due to the nature of his job . . . anyone who has ever spent one hour over a campfire on a windy day, or wet—who has burned his thumb, spilled the coffee, scorched the beans, found blowflies have gotten to the meat, and the water-keg empty, will understand why cooks are 'tetchy'."

Mrs. Hughes' book is divided into two parts. "Recollections" is a series of "what the eatin' was"—beef, breads, dee-zerts, the lowly free-holy (frijoles, or pinto beans), cooks and whiskey, cooks and stampedes, gun-totin' cooks, cooks that "sure come unwound" and home remedies. The stories are entrees which match the titles, served with a variety of reminiscences, like relish plates, of people, places and events full of hilarious humor.

Part Two is, of course, "Recipes." After reading these, I concluded that, in each of today's so-called "nuclear families," there should be a copy of this book and someone appointed to know it well. What those crotchety old camp cooks knew about cooking in their barbecue pits and with their dutch ovens would be priceless knowledge today in the event of a total energy failure or some other disaster which we smugly assume can't happen to us.

Among other things, one learns how to put down beef for the winter, make jerky, canned beef and corned beef. The marinade for wild game would enhance any meat and a hunter's wife would appreciate the description of preparing and roasting venison, elk or antelope.

The cowboys' natural craving for sweets resulted in their paying royal homage to a cook who could dream up a good-tasting dessert from the supplies at hand. Camp cooks were experts at substituting.

Mrs. Hughes proves that anything can be cooked in a dutch oven, but her recipes, tried in your kitchen, would lack only the flavor of the outdoors.

The "home remedies" of the last chapter have been collected over the years and the author recommends them only as fun reading. They were improvised by frontier men and women who lived

far from medical aid. While some seem strange, others are based on common sense.

The author's black and white drawings of gonch hooks, wrapping and wiring beef for barbecuing, of how to build a barbecue pit and how to place the dutch oven in the coals are worth twice as many words to a novice. Her illustrations of sturdy cooks and cowboys around their chuck wagon home are as finely detailed, but humorous and practical, as are her stories about them.

Newcastle

ELIZABETH J. THORPE

Shall the People Rule? A History of the Democratic Party in Nebraska Politics 1854-1972. By James F. Pedersen and Kenneth D. Wald. (Lincoln, Nebr.: Jacob North Inc., 1972). Index. Illus. 449 pp.

Meaningful political history must take into serious consideration the socio-economic milieu within which political action takes place. Social class, ethnic group influence and the reality of special interest pressures from private corporations play an important role in determining the formation and evolution of political factions and parties. It is precisely the lack of the social and economic background in this study which makes it far less valuable than it might otherwise have been.

Messrs. Pedersen and Wald were at the time that they collaborated on this work non-professional practitioners of the historian's trade. They evidently had good contacts with the Democratic Party organization in Nebraska; contacts sufficiently well established that the party sponsored and presumably underwrote the research and publication of this history. As an official history, the work is by no means completely uncritical of important figures in the history of the party but political bosses such as William Jennings Bryan, J. Sterling Morton, Gilbert Hitchcock and Arthur Mullen are, on the other hand, not really portrayed in unvarnished form. As an official history, sponsored and subsidized by a special interest group, the book must be approached with the same caution as company histories, annals of fraternal organizations and the like. The history is based on truth but perhaps not the whole truth.

Nebraska being a largely rural state with relatively few and fairly small urban areas, as compared to the industrial states of the northeast and middle west, politics took on from the first a highly personalized nature which it has retained to the present day. Issues tended to become embodied into personalities as witness the personification of the farmer's plight in William Jennings Bryan, certainly the most significant politician the state has yet produced. Prohibition, which became a highly volatile issue around the time of World War I, again had its leading political figures on either

side, often transcending political party lines. But above all, as the authors stress, Nebraskans tended to support those candidates advocating thrift and economy in government with a concomitant stability or even reduction in taxation.

The authors' narrative is complicated by the fact that the Democratic party in Nebraska has for much of its history been a minority and at times even an almost nonexistent entity. The period from 1870 to 1890 was one of Republic ascendancy while even during the glory years of William Jennings Bryan, the Populists rather than the Democrats tended to garner the majority of citizen interest. Once again, during the 1920s, the Democracy was in voter disfavor and even the New Deal paled early for many Nebraskan voters and probably had less of a permanent impact on the state's political orientation than it did on that of many other states. The politicians in the party who rode to power on Franklin D. Roosevelt's coattails often paid only lip service to New Deal ideology and as time passed even publicly repudiated the positive government thrust of the national party. The Nebraska democracy in recent years has more than held its own in the achievement of political office in the state, probably because of the relatively conservative, cautious candidates that the organization has presented to the voter.

The authors' study of the Democratic party in Nebraska is very much a surface observation of political phenomena, centering around individuals and electoral contests while the broad substratum of political reality is obscured or ignored. While the authors mention, for instance, that the prohibition issue had a very definite ethnic tingle insofar as supporters and opponents of dry laws were concerned, Pedersen and Wald never come to grips with Nebraska's important ethnic divisions and the role played by ethnic groups in the political structure of the state. Interesting in parts and competently written for the most part, *Shall the People Rule?* is an agreeable work but far from approaching a definitive analysis of the Nebraska democracy.

Camden County College
Blackwood, New Jersey

NORMAN LEDERER

Ranch Schoolteacher. By Eulalia Bourne. (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1974). Illus. 312 pp. \$8.50.

Reading *Ranch Schoolteacher* is like listening to a favorite aunt reminisce about her life spent teaching. The five-section autobiography gives short descriptions of each school taught by Mrs. Bourne, with the emphasis being placed on sketches of individual pupils, their parents, and the few neighbors in each area. Interspersed throughout these sketches is the image of a woman. She

begins the book as a teenager with "no college degree, no high school diploma, no elementary certificate," schools herself to pass the necessary tests to receive her second grade certificate, and continues to recount her teaching up to her reunion with former pupils after her retirement.

Fired from her first job for teaching the indecent one-step, a popular dance of the time, she becomes a bit more circumspect in public, but never loses the individuality that caused her to teach her numerous country schools in levis, to emphasize music, field trips, picnics, programs, and parties, and to reward "her children" with money she feels they earn as workers. She homesteads and drives over a hundred miles a week to different schools to earn the cash necessary to keep the homestead.

Mrs. Bourne stresses the need for understanding, respect, and caring between teacher and pupils. To achieve these things, she studied Spanish, and became one of the first bilingual teachers in the country schools. She also organized a newspaper, the "Little Cowpunchers" which printed stories written in English by Spanish-speaking children. It was so popular that she took it from school to school with her, each group of students carrying it on.

The only frustration encountered by the reader of the book is her fleeting, almost marginal comments on herself. Her purpose is to remember her schools, her children, and her experiences, but sometimes the scanty references to her personal life tantalize without satisfaction. The style is loosely chronological, and delightfully individual. The book is not only enjoyable; it is a valuable record of teaching in the rural schools of the Southwest.

*Northwest Community College
Powell*

WINIFRED S. WASDEN

Building An American Pedigree. A Study in Genealogy. By Norman Edgar Wright. (Provo: Brigham Young University Press, 1974). Illus. 639 pp. Paper. This book, planned and prepared while the author was a researcher at the LDS Genealogical Society, and later teaching at B. Y. U., is designed for the person who desires to confirm and extend his genealogy records without studying theory and background information. It is a practical book based on the training and experience of the author; it provides an outline of selected sources which are essential to American genealogy, covering their time period, content and availability.

The Little Lion of the Southwest. By Marc Simmons. (Chicago: The Swallow Press Inc., 1973). Index. Illus. 222 pp. \$8.95.

The Arizona of Joseph Pratt Allyn. Letters From a Pioneer Judge. Edited by John Nicolson. (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1974).

Adventures in the Apache Country. A Tour Through Arizona and Sonora, 1864. By J. Ross Browne. Re-edition with Introduction, Annotations and Index by Donald M. Powell. (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1974). Index. Illus. 292 pp. Cloth, \$9.50; paper, \$4.25.

The Pacific Slope. By Earl Pomeroy. (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1965). Index. Map. Illus. 397 pp. Cloth, \$12.50; paper, \$3.95.

Saleratus and Sagebrush. The Oregon Trail Through Wyoming. By Robert L. Munkres. (Cheyenne: Historical Research and Publications Division, Wyoming State Archives and Historical Department, 1974). Illus. 143 pp. Paper, \$3.50.

Memoirs of a White Crow Indian. By Thomas H. Leforge, as told by Thomas B. Marquis, with an Introduction by Joseph Medicine Crow and Herman J. Viola. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1974). Bison Book. 356 pp. \$3.95.

Contributors

ROBERT A. MURRAY, after numerous earlier visits, came to Wyoming to live in 1962. For the next six years he was the first museum curator, then supervisory historian at Fort Laramie National Historic Site. In 1968 he established a private consulting service for historical projects. He now resides in Sheridan, as president of Western Interpretive Services, Inc. Author of a dozen books and major monographs and over thirty scholarly articles, his latest work is *Military Posts of Wyoming*, recently released by Old Army Press.

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KAREN L. (MRS. CHARLES M.) LOVE received her M. A. in American Studies from the University of Wyoming in 1962. Her undergraduate work was at Wittenberg University, Springfield, Ohio. She is presently a learning lab instructor at Western Wyoming Community College. The J. B. Okie study was her master's thesis, for which she received grant-in-aid assistance from the Wyoming State Historical Society.

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ANNALS of WYOMING

FALL 1975



HUNTING BUFFALO

SHOOTING GLASS BALLS

FROM PRAIRIE

TO PALACE

1927 BULL DOG, THE BOY MESSENGER AT THE AGE OF

1927 BULL DOG, THE BOY MESSENGER AT THE AGE OF

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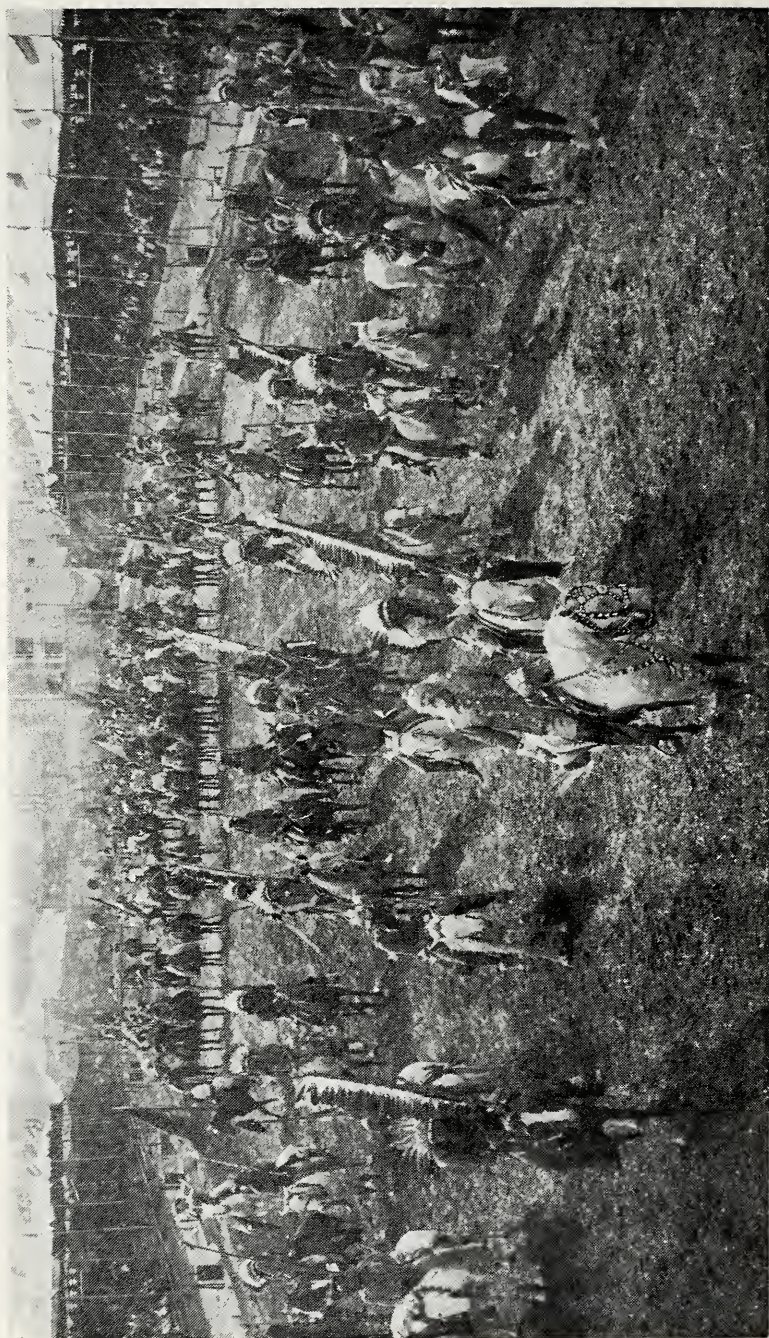
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Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show, 1885

By

WILLIAM E. DEAHL, JR.

Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show constituted one of the largest spectacles of American entertainment to evolve during the later part of the nineteenth century and rose to national popularity after only a few years of existence. The appearance of Buffalo Bill's show in a city, town, or village was a major event for amusement seekers of all ages. It combined the elements of the parade, the circus, the stage spectacular, the carnival, and the melodrama into one single event. In the short span of two and a half hours, the show took its viewers back to the golden era of the romanticized American West, a phase of American life that most people had experienced only in fiction, especially in dime novels. The hero of many of these dime novels was William F. Cody, "Buffalo Bill" as he was popularly known. His personal appearance was a central attraction of the Wild West Show: children and adults alike thrilled to see him ride into the arena, dressed in his fringed buckskin jacket and a broad brimmed Stetson, mounted on his white horse. Buffalo Bill was the personification of the American western hero and his show offered romanticized versions of some of the more action-packed events that Americans experienced as they moved westward across their continent.

The 1885 season of Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show is representative of the western derivation of this distinctive, popular American entertainment. That year the exhibition was embarking upon its third season, which was much more successful than the previous two. A majority of the acts making up the 1885 program established the characteristic attractions of Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show as well as becoming the precedent for wild west shows as an entertainment form. In order to illustrate the significance of the 1885 season, this article intends to describe the major features of

(Cover photo)

—Buffalo Bill Historical Center, Cody, Wyoming

(Photo opposite page)

—Wyoming State Archives and Historical Department

GRAND PROCESSIONAL, WILD WEST SHOW

Cody's exhibition that year and to analyze its success as a popular entertainment.

Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show unofficially commenced its third season on April 11, 1885, by closing its winter tour of New Orleans, Louisiana, and departing to Mobile, Alabama. The exhibition had played New Orleans since December 23, with modest success, but its performances had been greatly hampered by changing weather conditions.¹

The unfavorable weather conditions apparently decreased the anticipated financial success of the winter tour and caused the retirement of one of Cody's partners, Captain A. H. Bogardus.² The retirement of Bogardus and his sons in New Orleans allowed for the trial appearance of a new shooting act featuring Miss Annie Oakley. Concurrently with the Wild West Show, Miss Oakley and her husband, Frank Butler, had been in New Orleans with Sells Brothers Circus. There Butler negotiated with Cody a trial appearance of his wife in Louisville, Kentucky. The *Courier-Journal* commented upon Miss Oakley's first appearance with Buffalo Bill's entertainment venture:

A handsome young girl performed some remarkable feats with both shotgun and rifle, and probably received more recognition from the audience than any other members of the company except Buffalo Bill.³

Annie Oakley's initial appearance proved a great success and started a seventeen-year career with Cody's show. Annie Oakley was to become the only performer who ever seriously competed with Buffalo Bill for popularity with the audience.

After leaving Louisville, the Wild West Show gave several one-day performances in Indiana and Illinois, followed by a week's stay in St. Louis, Missouri. The *Globe-Democrat* estimated the attendance at the St. Louis opening at 25,000. The popularity of the exhibition was attested to by the newspaper's assessment of the audience's response to the show:

The most remarkable fact is that among so many thousands there were heard no grumblings nor expressions of dissatisfaction, and those who were present will have nothing but agreeable recollections of the Buffalo Bill Wild West.⁴

¹*Daily Picayune*, December 16, 1884 - April 8, 1885.

²Walter Havighurst, *Annie Oakley of the Wild West* (New York: Macmillan Company, 1954), pp. 30-40. Bogardus was acclaimed the Champion Pigeon Shot of America. During the first year of the exhibition, he had appeared in shooting contests against Dr. William F. Carver, the Evil Spirit of the Plains. In the following year, Bogardus and his four sons were major shooting performers in the exhibition, but the disappointing winter tour caused Bogardus to leave the show and to retire to Illinois.

³*Courier-Journal*, April 25, 1885, p. 5.

⁴*Daily Globe-Democrat*, May 15, 1885, p. 10.

Following the successful week in St. Louis, the show moved on to the city of Chicago for its next engagement.

The exhibition inaugurated a two-week stand in Chicago's Driving Park on May 17, 1885. Performances were held only in the afternoon; the gates to the grounds were opened at 1:00 p.m. with the performance at 3:30 p.m. General William Tecumseh Sherman praised the show as "wonderfully realistic and historically reminiscent" in an ad which appeared in the *Chicago Tribune*. The admission fee was 50¢ for adults and 25¢ for children.⁵

The people of Chicago turned out en masse to greet the Wild West Show: more than twenty-thousand persons, according to the *Chicago Tribune*. The attendance was roughly over one-twentieth of the population of the city and was estimated as exceeding the combined audience of all the preachers of Chicago that Sunday morning.⁶ The spectator's excursion to the West Side Driving Park was not altogether pleasant:

From noon till nearly 4 o'clock there was matter for moralizing at every corner on the West Side. The ungodly were out in masse. They boarded the sweltering and overloaded cars, braved the discomforts of a sultry but showery day, and waited for dilatory suburban trains, and resolutely turned their backs on churches and every other mark of civilization to take up, and echo along the line the cry of westward ho!⁷

Arriving on the grounds, the masses crowded their way into the race track until there was standing room only. The audience represented "every sex and condition of society" and awaited with anticipation the opening of the show. The *Daily Inter-Ocean* surveyed the offerings of the Chicago inauguration of the Wild West Show:

This afternoon 'Buffalo Bill's Wild West' will inaugurate a season at the Chicago Driving Park, rain or shine. The company is reconstructed, improved, and enlarged. These performances are an exact picture of frontier life with the hunters, trappers, and cowboys; the Indians in their vari-colored costumes and war-paint; the free—powerful and graceful movements of their well trained horses; the camp, with its rude tents and appliances, form a spectacle which could not be seen elsewhere than the Western plains. The performance is purely American, and every act represents something distinctively characteristic of American life.⁸

The 1885 season saw Cody's show traveling under the copyrighted name: *The Wild West or Life Among the Red Men and the Road Agents of the Plains and Prairies—A Equine Dramatic*

⁵*Chicago Tribune*, May 15, 1885, p. 10.

⁶*Ibid.*, May 18, 1885, p. 10.

Adam Forepaugh and the Wild West Show.

⁷*Ibid.*

⁸*Daily Inter-Ocean*, May 17, 1885, p. 13.

Exposition on Grass or Under Canvas, of the Adventures of Frontiersmen and Cowboys. Part of the reason for the copyright was to give Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show a legal claim to an entertainment starring William F. Cody, since in May of 1885, there were four other "Wild West" shows besides Cody's enterprise.⁹ Buffalo Bill publicly voiced his objections to his competition to an interviewer for the *Chicago Tribune*:

They differ from his in many respects, and he himself ridicules them as being but mimic copies of his own great open-air show in which he pictures anew his old exploits. Still, whether they are good or bad, he objects to them upon the theory that when they call themselves the 'Wild West' they are encroaching upon his possessions, taking advantage of his discovery, and staking off a claim on ground already claimed.¹⁰

The copyrighting of the program of Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show during 1885 allows for a reconstruction of the exhibition using the information contained in the copyright material. The show commenced with a Grand Processional introducing the celebrities and performers of the Wild West Show to the audience. Individuals or groups rode into the arena, stopped before the grandstand, and received a formal introduction. The processional was followed by a succession of acts, all of which were supposed to represent life upon the frontier.

The Cowboy Band under the direction of William Sweeney provided a variety of musical selections while the audience awaited the start of the performance. The band members were dressed appropriately in western attire topped off with large-brimmed, white felt hats. Once the preparations were all in order, Mr. Frank Richmond, the master of ceremonies, took his position in the judges' box and made the following public announcement:

Before the entertainment begins, however, I wish to impress upon your minds that what you are about to witness is not a performance in the common sense of that term, but an exhibition of skill, on the part of men who have acquired that quality while gaining a livelihood. Many unthinking people suppose that the different features of our exhibition are the result of what is technically called 'rehearsals.' Such, however, is not the fact, and anyone who witnesses our performance the second time will observe that men and animals alike are the creatures of circumstances, depending for their success upon their own skill, daring and sagacity.¹¹

The Grand Processional of Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show began, accompanied with music by the Cowboy Band. The gates to the

⁹The other four Wild West Shows included Carver and Crawford Wild West with J. J. McCafferty, Fargo's Wild West, Hennessey's Wild West, and
¹⁰*Chicago Tribune*, May 26, 1885, p. 5.

¹¹B. A. Botkin, *A Treasury of American Folklore* (New York: Crown Publishing, Inc., 1944), pp. 150-51.

track opened: The various members of the company raced into the arena and slowly paraded in review before the stands. The procedure was for a specific group of performers to enter, followed separately by their chief or leaders, who were introduced accordingly by Mr. Richmond. The first members of the processional were the Pawnee Indians, followed by their chief, White Eagle. The Mexican *vaqueros* were the next group to pass in review, followed by the Wichita Indians and their leader, Dave. A group of American cowboys next raced into the arena, followed by the "King of the Cowboys," Buck Taylor.

Con Groner, the cowboy sheriff of the Platte, now made his appearance. The newspapers credited Groner with capturing over fifty murderers and even a greater number of horse thieves, cattle cutters, burglars, and outlaws; it claimed his service as sheriff brought peace and quiet to the region around North Platte, Nebraska. The *Morning Herald* of London, Ontario, characterized Groner as the gallant sheriff who "looked anything but the personification of peace and repose, with his rifle in his hand and a formidable array of revolvers and bowie knives in his belt."¹² Once Groner had greeted the audience, a group of Sioux Indians and their chief, Little Brave, made their appearance. The stage was now set for the climax of the Grand Processional and the special introduction of the next celebrity:

I next have the honor of introducing to your attention a man whose record as a servant of the government, whose skill and daring as a frontiersman, whose place in history as the chief of scouts of the United States Army, under such generals as Sherman, Sheridan, Hancock, Terry, Miles, Hazen, Royal, Merrit, Crook, Carr, and others, and whose name as one of the avengers of the lamented Custer, and whose adherence throughout an eventful life to his chosen principle of 'true to friend and foe,' have made him well and popularly known throughout the world. You all know to whom I allude—the Honorable William F. Cody, 'Buffalo Bill.'¹³

With a bugle fanfare, Cody galloped into the arena astride his horse, Charlie, reined up before the stands and gave a personal address to the audience: "Ladies and Gentlemen: Allow me to introduce the equestrian portion of the Wild West Exhibition." Cody turned to the company and asked, "Wild West, are you ready? Go!" With this, the Wild West Show was officially underway. The review exited and the first performers took their positions.

The first attraction of the Wild West Show was a quarter-mile horse race between a cowboy, a Mexican, and an Indian. This was

¹²Nathan Salsbury Scrapbook Collection: Western Collection, Denver Public Library, Denver, Colorado. (Cited hereafter as NSSC.) *Morning Herald*, September 8, 1885.

¹³Botkin, p. 151.

followed by a demonstration of the Pony Express. Billy Johnson, billed as a former Pony Express rider, performed this act. The Burlington, Vermont, *Free Press and Times* cited Johnson as having ridden 240 miles over the plains without dismounting at one time and having ridden a record of 310 miles in 26 hours, 45 minutes.¹⁴ The re-enactment of the early western method of carrying the mail performed by Johnson was described by the *Toronto Globe*:

He started with the mail bags from the quarter pole, came down to within three lengths of the judges stand without slacking speed, but in that short space checked his pony so suddenly as to throw him almost on his haunches. The pony was barely at a standstill before the rider was on the ground throwing the mail bags over his shoulder, had tossed them on the back of the other horse, and was galloping off at full speed in less time than it would take an ordinary rider to dismount.¹⁵

Johnson performed his task quickly and departed from the arena, making way for the next event, a one-hundred-yard race between an Indian on foot and an Indian mounted on a pony.

The fourth act, the Duel between Buffalo Bill and Chief Yellow Hand, dramatized the struggle of the frontiersman against the plains Indian. The feature was based on an incident from Cody's life in 1876 when he was a scout with the Fifth Cavalry and participated in the encounter at War Bonnet Creek in Dakota Territory. According to the legend, Cody was to have taken the "first scalp for Custer" in this skirmish with the Indians. The feature started with the entrance of cowboys and Indians into the arena and the formation of two opposing lines with a small hill between them. The Indian portraying Chief Yellow Hand rode to the hill and issued a challenge to the cowboy band which was accepted by Buffalo Bill. The combatants exchanged rifle shots while advancing on one another.

At length the men closed and after a short struggle dismounted, and the fight being continued on foot, Yellow Hand using his spear and Buffalo Bill his knife. After considerable fencing and dodging they closed, and the next instant the supposed scalp of Yellow Hand was triumphantly exhibited by the invincible scout of the plains.¹⁶

At this sign, the Indians charged and "a lively contest ensued;" the Indians were overpowered and driven off with the cowboys in pursuit. The people viewing this portrayal of the battle may well have judged it to be an authentic reconstruction of the actual event; they did not seem to question the incident thus represented. Through the western skills he displayed in the arena, Buffalo Bill

¹⁴*Burlington Free Press and Times*, August 6, 1885. NSSC.

¹⁵*Globe*, August 24, 1885. NSSC.

¹⁶*Ibid.*

was able to reinforce his frontier hero image as it had been created in the dime novel.

Marksmanship constituted the next part of the Wild West Show, shifting the focus to less emotionally charged features. Mr. Seth Clover, the first marksman introduced by Mr. Richmond, used a Winchester repeating rifle to shoot various moving targets. For his first stunt, Clover would shoot two glass balls thrown into the air at once, replacing the discharged cartridge before shooting the second ball in the air. He continued his act by shooting with his rifle sight obscured, aiming at half dollars, nickels, and marbles thrown into the air and by shooting a number of composition balls thrown in rapid succession.¹⁷ This concluded Clover's act, and he was followed by Master Johnny Baker and his demonstration of shooting at stationary targets while holding his rifle in a variety of positions. Baker, at sixteen years of age, was credited as holder of the boy's champion badge for rifle and revolver shooting.¹⁸

Miss Annie Oakley performed the last of the featured shooting acts of the show. Her feats of marksmanship included shooting clay pigeons thrown from a trap, either single or in pairs. She could break glass balls with her rifle held high overhead. Part of her act was to lay her rifle on the ground, throw glass balls into the air, pick up her rifle, and shoot the balls before they fell to the ground. For another stunt, three composition balls were thrown into the air in rapid succession, and Miss Oakley would hit the first, firing the rifle held upside down on her head, then change weapons, shooting the second and third balls with a shotgun.¹⁹

After Annie Oakley's performance, the focus of the audience's attention was shifted to Cowboy Fun and the riding of bucking ponies by such colorfully named riders as Broncho Bill, Bill Bullock, Tom Clayton, Coyote Bill, and Bridle Bill. Tom Clayton attempted to ride the especially difficult horse aptly named "Dynamite." In true western fashion, Dynamite tried everything he could to unseat Clayton, reportedly even turning somersaults, but Clayton finally subdued the bucking horse. The people of Boston especially enjoyed this feature of the exhibition.²⁰ The conclusion of Cowboy Fun was performed by none other than the "King of the Cowboys," himself, Buck Taylor. Taylor performed feats of skill and horsemanship by riding bucking horses and doing tricks on horseback, such as picking up his hat and handkerchief from the ground with his horse running at a full gallop.²¹

Buffalo Bill, Himself, was the single attraction of the ninth act

¹⁷Botkin, p. 152.

¹⁸*Ibid.*, p. 153.

¹⁹*Ibid.*

²⁰*Boston Daily Advertiser*, July 28, 1885. NSSC.

²¹*Boston Evening Express*, July 25, 1885. NSSC.



—Buffalo Bill Historical Center, Cody, Wyoming

WILD WEST SHOW POSTER

Miss Annie Oakley was featured as "The Peerless Lady Wing-Shot."

of the Wild West exhibition. The Honorable William F. Cody claimed the distinction of being the "Champion All-Round Shot of the World," and his act offered numerous ways for him to prove this title. First, he shot clay pigeons by pulling the traps himself and using both the American and English methods of holding the rifle. Next he shot clay pigeons holding the rifle with only one hand and with other variations. The final part of his act performed on foot was to shoot at clay pigeons and to hit twenty of them in less than one minute and thirty seconds. The rest of Cody's performance was done on horseback with a Winchester repeating rifle; he shot glass balls in various ways while he was riding. This produced "a picture of combined horsemanship and

marksmanship never before presented to a public audience." Buffalo Bill brought his act to an end by shooting glass balls thrown into the air using an ordinary Colt's army revolver.²² The *Chicago Tribune* reported that Cody was the object of general admiration, especially among the youthful romantics present, who saw in him an incarnation of their young ideals.²³

The great crowd thriller, the Attack upon the Deadwood Stagecoach, was next presented to the audience. Mr. Richmond introduced the driver, Mr. John Higby; the man seated beside Higby, John Hancock; the outrider, Broncho Bill; and the man on the top of the coach, Con Groner. Volunteers from the audience served as passengers. Once loaded, the stagecoach was ready to go. Mr. Richmond delivered these parting instructions to the driver: "Mr. Higby, I have entrusted you with valuable lives and property. Should you meet with Indians, or other dangers, *en route*, put on the whip, and if possible, save the lives of your passengers. If you are all ready, go!"²⁴ The stagecoach rolled out onto the track of the arena and started off on the simulated journey. A reporter for the *Washington Post* wrote a vivid account of the dramatization of the attack upon the stagecoach:

Suddenly a piercing yell was heard, and a party of mounted Indians galloped from behind a canvas sheet, where they had been lying in ambush, and pursued the coach. Higby lashed his mules into a furious gallop and rushed madly over the cinder track, the coach jumping and swaying from side to side. Nearer and nearer came the Indians, yelling like mad and exchanging rapid shots with the passengers. As the coach turned the curve by the stands again, the foremost Indians came up with it, pouring shot after shot into the driver, whose capacity for holding lead seemed unlimited. The spectators sat spellbound. Suddenly another body of horsemen appeared, headed by 'Buffalo Bill,' and charged on the yelling savages. A desperate encounter ensued which resulted in the flight of the Indians and the rescue of the coach and the thrilling act ended in a blaze of Grecian fire from the interior of the vehicle in a realistic manner peculiar to the original genius of the West.²⁵

This act contributed to the popular myth that in the face of the dangers in life on the frontier, a hero such as Buffalo Bill was near at hand to come to the rescue.

After the smoke cleared and the crowd had calmed down, the exhibition continued with the depiction of some milder features of life upon the American plains. The eleventh and twelfth features were horse races. The first of these was a one-quarter mile race between Sioux boys and bareback ponies and the other was a contest between cowboys on Mexican thoroughbreds, or mules.

²²Botkin, p. 154.

²³*Chicago Tribune*, May 18, 1885, p. 8.

²⁴Botkin, p. 155.

²⁵*Post*, June 23, 1885, p. 1.

For the next act, the Pawnee and Wichita Indians returned to the arena to demonstrate their native sports and ceremonies, including the war dance, the grass dance, and the scalp dance. Responses by members of a Chicago audience reflected a definite lack of understanding and respect for the Indian culture. According to the *Tribune*:

The audience persisted in regarding the Pawnee war dance—an intensely solemn ceremonial—as a bit of pure humor, to the obvious disgust of the dancing braves, who looked thoroughly disheartened at such sallies as ‘Rats!’ ‘Whoop ‘er up ther, Jim!’ ‘Dosy-do’ at the most critical points in their performance.²⁶

These reactions would seem to indicate that the Indians appearing with Buffalo Bill’s Wild West Show were sometimes ridiculed rather than greeted with awe and wonder.

The acts preceding the final exciting feature were rather unusual and probably provided a great deal of amusement. The fourteenth act was Mustang Jack, the high jumper. The Indians called him “pet-ze-ka-we-cha-cha.” Mr. Richmond announced that Mustang Jack was the champion jumper among the cowboys of the West and that he stood “ready to jump with anybody in any manner or style for any amount of money.” Mustang Jack displayed his jumping skill by vaulting over burros and horses. Following the unique demonstration of human athletic ability, numerous cowboys and Mexican *vaqueros* displayed their horsemanship and skills with cattle by roping and tying wild Texas steers. The sixteenth attraction was the riding of an elk. The rider was introduced as Master Voter Hall, a Feejee Indian from Africa. However, Mr. Hall was in reality a black American cowboy.²⁷

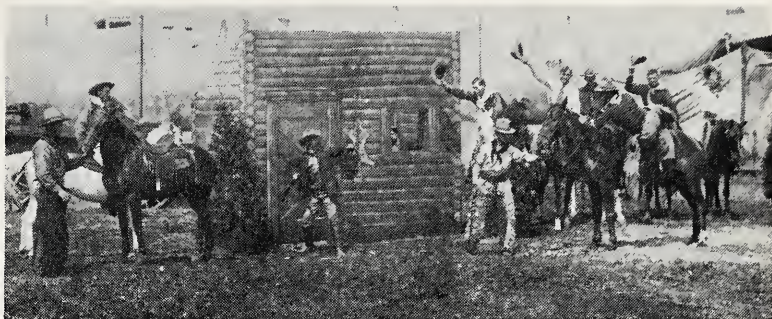
Following this unusual assortment of acts, the Wild West Show presented its final spectacle, the Attack upon a Settler’s Cabin. This act had been the closing performance during the winter tour of New Orleans where the *Daily Picayune* had described it as a chapter from a dime novel, portraying “the dangers of frontier life and the chivalry existing among the inhabitants” of the frontier:

John Nelson came to his cabin after his hunt, and preparations for supper were begun. Indians stealthily approached, and one kept watch on the (cabin) while the other stole the horse. The hunter’s son discovered the thief and fired. The hunter came out, there was an onslaught of a whole band of whooping red devils, and then came a splendid charge of cowboys. After a running fight on horseback, with enough firing of pistols in it to make the small boy howl with delight, men shot from their saddles and riderless steeds dashing around, the cowboys won the victory and the cabin was saved.²⁸

²⁶*Chicago Tribune*, May 18, 1885, p. 8.

²⁷Botkin, p. 156.

²⁸*Daily Picayune*, December 24, 1884, p. 4.



—Wyoming State Archives and Historical Department
 "ATTACK UPON A SETTLER'S CABIN"

Buffalo Bill once more had come to the rescue and had saved the day.

Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show came to an end with the full cast assembling before the grandstand, similar to the curtain call for a dramatic play. Cody offered an adieu to the audience and dismissed the Wild West company. Mr. Richmond invited the spectators to visit the Wild West camp before leaving the grounds.

Although the scheduled acts of the 1885 program as outlined were highly successful, the management added one other attraction to the Grand Processional during the course of the season. The new, special guest was Chief Sitting Bull of the Hunkpapa Sioux. Sitting Bull joined the show in Buffalo, New York, on June 12. Immediately he was given top billing in the show's advertising. However, his participation in the show was limited to his riding in the processional, following Buffalo Bill. Sitting Bull was well known by reputation to the public because of his participation in the Battle of Little Big Horn and his successful evasion of capture by the United States Army before he returned to his own people in the Dakotas. Chief Sitting Bull was a member of the Wild West Show for only the 1885 season.²⁹

Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show played in more than forty cities during its 1885 season. Some of the larger cities on the route after Chicago were Washington, D. C., Baltimore, Philadelphia, Boston, Montreal, Toronto, Detroit, and Pittsburg. Sample gate receipts were reported by the *New York Dramatic Mirror* at \$25,000 for two performances in Buffalo, New York,³⁰ and \$20,000 for a single performance in Lansing, Michigan.³¹

²⁹Don Russell, *The Lives and Legends of Buffalo Bill* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1960), p. 316.

³⁰*New York Dramatic Mirror*, June 20, 1885, p. 5.

³¹*Ibid.*, September 19, 1885, p. 5.

The 1885 success of Buffalo Bill's exhibition is summarized in two newspaper reviews of the exhibition. The first, written in the flamboyant journalistic style of the era by Brick Pomroy, appeared in the *Montreal Herald*:

All the operas in the world appear like pretty playthings for emasculated children by the side of the setting of reality and the muse of the frontier as so faithfully and extensively presented, and so cleverly managed by this incomparable representative of Western pluck, coolness, bravery, independence, and generosity.³²

The family appeal of the Wild West Show was praised by Mayor Beaugrand of Montreal, Canada, in an address made to Cody and his company after witnessing a performance of the exhibition:

Your show is decidedly the best that has ever been presented to the people of Montreal. There is absolutely nothing in it that is harmful. A gentleman can bring with him his wife and children to witness the feats of daring and skill of life upon the plains as portrayed by yourself and your men, knowing that there is nothing injurious to the most susceptible nature or the most refined mind.³³

Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show ended its third season at the St. Louis Fair on October 11, 1885.

Apparently the frontier muse was with Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show. The general public supported and found entertainment in Cody's outdoor drama based upon the romanticizing of the development of the American West. Part of the show's success can be attributed to its capitalizing on a growing interest in the western frontier among easterners. For those people living in the well-settled urban areas of the United States and Canada, a vivid, live reproduction of "The Wild West; or Life Among the Red Man and Road Agents on the Plains and Prairies" offered an exciting, but safe, way to experience the adventurous life on the frontier. During an afternoon at the exhibition, a spectator could witness some of the most popular characters of America's trans-Mississippi migration: the plains Indian with his dress, customs, and rituals as they were before the frontiersman arrived; the rustic trapper who lived among the Indians; the Pony Express rider; the cowboys and *vaqueros* with their riding and roping skills; the skilled marksman; and the accomplished horseman. The spectator could also see these various people in conflict as their differing civilizations clashed.

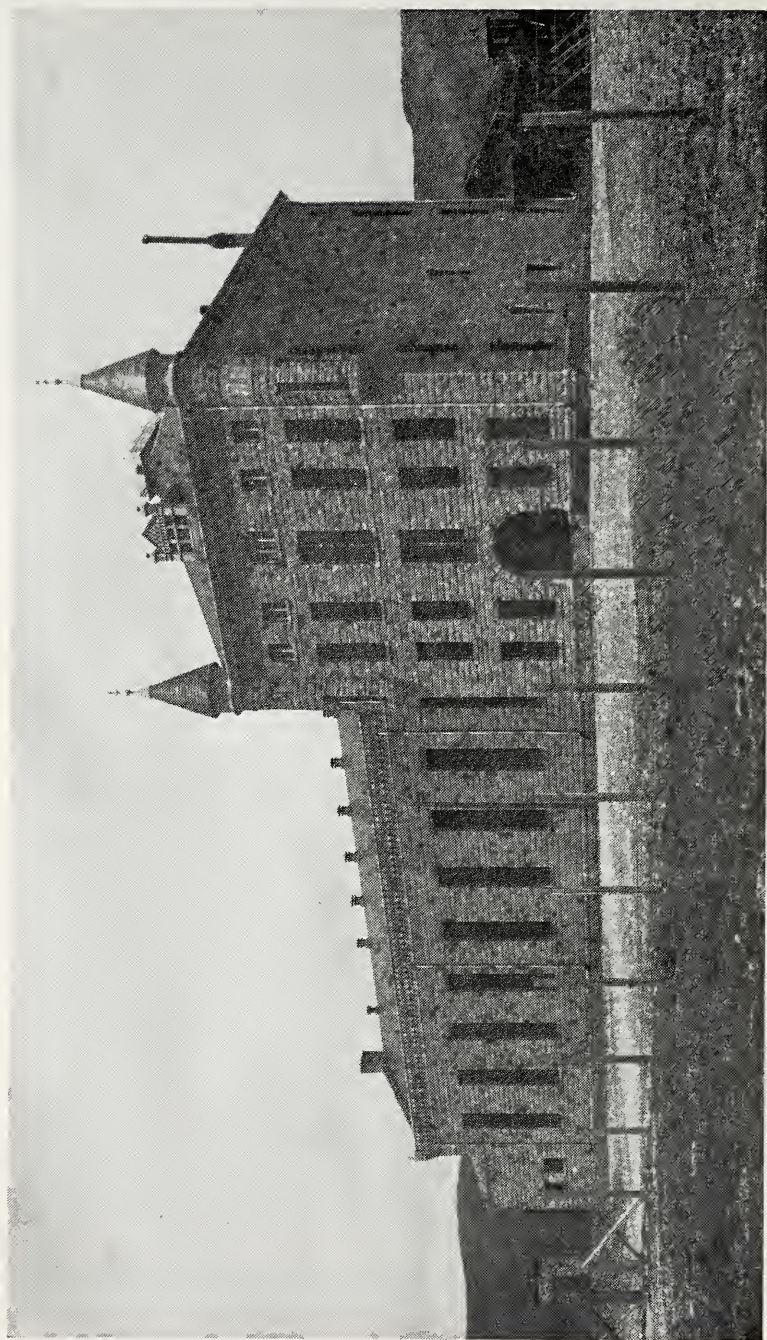
Although the Wild West Show did present the customs and rituals of the plains Indians, the Indians were nevertheless depicted as a hostile force, an obstacle to the white man's conquest of the continent. In this role, the Sioux Indians proved to be the most

³²*Montreal Herald*, August 10, 1885. NSSC.

³³*Ibid.*, August 17, 1885.

useful. Their civilization provided colorful dress and customs and was advanced enough to offer opposition to the advance of the frontiersman. Also, at the time of Chief Sitting Bull's appearance with the Wild West Show, outward hostilities existed between the Sioux Indians and the American government. The Indian was more than a historical curiosity; he also represented a current threat, a reminder of America's violent and relentless conquest of an expansive and untamed land. This increased the attraction of the Indian features of the exhibition. The violent conflicts between the white man and the Indian, including the simulated scalping of an Indian warrior (depicted in the Yellow Hand feature) could be praised by the Mayor of Montreal, Canada, as family entertainment, "with nothing injurious to the most susceptible nature or the most refined mind."

The greatest single attraction of Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show was William F. Cody. His reputation greatly contributed to the success of the exhibition. Cody had been a participant in the development of the West, and his adventures as a Pony Express rider, a buffalo hunter, and an Indian scout had been dramatized in the Buffalo Bill dime novels. Cody was a western hero. Moreover, he was an invincible hero, who according to his press stories and dime novels, rode, shot, scalped Indians, and saved maidens in distress. Thus, the Wild West Show offered people the opportunity to see Buffalo Bill re-enact some of his historic deeds. In addition, they could see real Indians, real cowboys, and an authentic display of the skills used in the settlement of the American West. Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show succeeded because it combined a romantic view of the West with an aura of authenticity to create an acceptable and exciting form of entertainment for the masses.



"I Felt Like I Must Be Entering . . . Another World."

THE ANONYMOUS MEMOIRS OF AN EARLY INMATE
OF THE WYOMING PENITENTIARY

By

GORDON L. OLSON

American history is, for the most part, the story of men who obeyed the law; and profited from their obedience. Historians, although fascinated by the careers of notorious lawbreakers, have not had a great deal to say about American penology. Those histories which have been written rely heavily on official records, emphasizing statistical information and the changing philosophy of penal administration.¹ Accounts of life behind prison walls are not readily available. There are obvious reasons for this. Few prisoners wish to attract undue attention to themselves, either while they are in prison or after, and until well into the twentieth century, prisoners had a much higher illiteracy rate than the general public. Thus, clearly written accounts of life in prison are important historical documents. The Historical Research and Publications Division of the Wyoming State Archives and Historical Department has one such document on microfilm. Written by a man who spent nearly ten years in the Wyoming State Prison between 1904 and 1920, it offers a keyhole view of life among a frontier society's rejects. The author preferred to remain anonymous. A disgrun-

(Photo opposite page)

—Stimson Photo Collection

Wyoming State Archives and Historical Department

WYOMING STATE PENITENTIARY, 1905

¹Orlando F. Lewis, *The Development of American Prisons and Prison Customs, 1776-1845*, (New York: 1922), is a detailed study of prisons during the nation's formative years, with emphasis on the institutions of New York State. Blake McKelvey, *American Prisons: A Study in American Social History prior to 1915*, (Chicago: 1936), spans the period from 1735-1915, relying heavily upon annual reports and other official documents. David J. Rothman, *The Discovery of Asylum: Social Order and Disorder in the New Republic*, (Boston: 1971), is a re-interpretation of the causes for the formation of American asylums in the Jacksonian era, suggesting asylums were an effort to insure community cohesion in new and changing circumstances.

tled youth who left home at an early age, he was in trouble with the law before he was out of his teens. After his first fracas, trouble seemed to follow him, and before long, he found himself on his way to Rawlins for a year, to mull over his transgressions. That first incarceration had little or no reform effect, nor did a second. Only after three separate periods of forced inactivity did he decide to turn his back on lawlessness and lead a more exemplary life as a Wyoming rancher. Having once made the decision, he seems to have abided by it.

The prison to which that anonymous inmate kept returning reflected the prevalent national attitudes toward prisons and inmates. Like many western institutions, it was stamped from an eastern mold. Americans moved westward in unprecedented numbers after the Civil War. Traveling light, these migrants carried items they deemed essential, a few luxuries if there was room, and little else. So it was, too, with their cultural baggage. It was not their intention to create new institutions. Units of government, schools, courts, churches, prisons—all were based upon tested models.

Reformatory penology was the watchword in the East. Concern over cruelty, debauchery, and corruption in the nation's prisons led, on the national level, to the formation of the American Society for the Improvement of Penal and Reformatory Institutions, and, on the state level, to boards of charity and reform. With humanitarian idealism dominating the attitude of prison professionals, limited improvement in living conditions, sentencing procedure, and labor conditions was soon apparent. Progressive prison wardens graded prisoners according to their degree of reformation, recognized the need to reform as well as punish prisoners, created separate facilities for women and juvenile offenders, provided educational and religious instruction, meted out sentences which could be adjusted by parole boards, and relaxed the "silent system." Another major concern of the era was housing. It is a mark of the acceptance of the reform efforts that they were incorporated into the planning for new structures. As early as the 1820s, a penitentiary was constructed at Auburn, New York, which had individual cells and a congregate work area. The "Auburn System" became the ideal for much of the nation for the remainder of the century.²

Reading only the reports of wardens and state boards, one cannot help but conclude American penitentiaries are well run, forward looking, humanitarian reform institutions. Accounts by prisoners present a different picture. Alexander Berkman, a prisoner at Pennsylvania's Riverside Penitentiary, collected evidence which told a conflicting story. He noted very little of the

²McKelvey, *Prisons*, pp. 8, 48-92.

individual improvement reported by prison officials. Instead, he wrote of vengeful guards who delighted in confining men to the "dungeon," of "stoos" who regularly reported to the officials, of quack doctors who gave little or no health care, and the "cracked ward" which was all too often the next step after graduation from the dungeon. Rather than uplifting activities, he wrote of bootleg opium, liquor, tobacco, and knives, of traffic in the "kid business," and of births among female prisoners.³

The dichotomy between humanitarian ideals and harsh realities were magnified when eastern penal institutions were transplanted west of the Mississippi. The people of Wyoming Territory endured an extremely haphazard penal system. Prior to 1872, Wyoming sent its convicted felons to the Detroit House of Correction. Addressing the first territorial legislature in 1869, Governor John Campbell pointed to the need for a penitentiary. Four years later, he was able to report that "in October, 1872, the Territorial Penitentiary at Laramie City was completed" and since that time, prisoners convicted in the territory in both the Territorial and the United States courts had been sentenced to confinement in it.⁴

The stone prison, designed to accommodate forty-two prisoners in three tiers of cells, was soon overcrowded. A Laramie newspaper stated in 1877, "If that Cheyenne Court doesn't stop pretty soon, there will be a hundred. We'll have to get up a returning board and throw out a lot of them. Every term of the Cheyenne Court sends from 25 to 30 men recruits for the house over the river and yet there is no perceptible decrease of rascals down there."⁵ Whether or not it was the result of an excessive number of rascals in Cheyenne, the Laramie Penitentiary could not accommodate all those for whom the court had made reservations. The State Board of Penitentiary Commissioners, created in 1877, discovered it was costing the state \$1.00 per day for each prisoner. They soon discovered they could do better elsewhere, and over the objections of Governor John Hoyt, a contract was made with the Nebraska Penitentiary to incarcerate Wyoming's prisoners at a rate of 40 cents a day for each inmate. The contract was renewed in 1880, and again in 1882. Later in 1882, a second contract was made with the Illinois Penitentiary at Joliet, and new prisoners were sent there.⁶

For the next nine years, the Wyoming Territorial Penitentiary,

³Alexander Berkman, *Prison Memories of an Anarchist*, (New York: 1912), pp. 240-262, 304-307.

⁴Message of Governor John Campbell to the First Legislative Assembly of Wyoming Territory, 1873. Wyoming State Archives, Cheyenne.

⁵Cited in the *Laramie Republican Boomerang*, February 25, 1962.

⁶*Minutes of the Wyoming Territorial Board of Penitentiary Commissioners*, January 16, 1878-January 22, 1891. Wyoming State Archives, Cheyenne, pp. 2, 15, 29, 31, 113, 129, 180.

for all intents and purposes, was located in Joliet, Illinois. Only a few short-term prisoners were retained in Laramie. In 1884, a Federal examiner found ten prisoners, three guards and Marshal Gustave Schnitger's family living together in apparent familial bliss. He also found several escapes had gone unreported, one convict worked as the Marshal's ranch hand, and prisoners often borrowed civilian clothes to go into Laramie on Saturday nights. Not surprisingly, the examiner found Schnitger to be "an innocent sort but unfit for duty," and recommended he be removed.⁷

Even as Marshal Schnitger conducted his pioneering venture in minimum security detention, charges were in the wind. There is a longstanding legend in Wyoming that when institutions were distributed, the order of selection was Cheyenne, Rawlins, Evanston, and Laramie, and that by preference they chose the capital, penitentiary, insane asylum and university. The tale, of course, is fanciful.⁸ However, the Territorial Building Act of 1888, provided for "a penitentiary building" erected near the city of Rawlins at a cost not exceeding \$100,000.⁹ With that legislation, the history of penal institutions in Wyoming entered a new phase. When the Rawlins institution was opened, Wyoming would cease to send its inmates out of state. Work progressed slowly. In the 1890s the structure was allowed to stand partially completed for a time, until the legislature appropriated additional funds.

Meanwhile, the Laramie facility became more and more crowded. Although the Rawlins penitentiary was completed in 1897, the transfer of prisoners by train did not begin until December, 1901. This delay was the result of a dispute with the leasee of the Laramie Prison. The state had been leasing the entire Laramie facility to a private individual since 1891, trading the products of the inmates' labor for their upkeep, retaining only the right to appoint a warden. Finally, the state agreed to permit the leasee to transfer his lease to Rawlins and the transfer was begun. The new prison was almost immediately overcrowded. A new wing, housing thirty-two additional prisoners, was constructed in 1904. This addition, along with later remodeling, permitted the Board of Charities and Reform to close down the Laramie prison in 1907, turning the building over to the University for use as an agricultural experiment station.¹⁰

⁷The investigator's report is preserved in the National Archives, Washington, D. C., Department of Justice Appointment File for Gustave Schnitger. See also the *Laramie Republican Boomerang*, February 25, 1962, for lengthy quotes from the file.

⁸The tale is so persistent, however, that T. A. Larson felt it necessary to refute it in his *History of Wyoming* (Lincoln: 1965), p. 145.

⁹Frances Birkhead Beard, *Wyoming from Territorial Days to the Present*, Chicago and New York: American Historical Society, Inc., 1933), p. 337.

¹⁰*Biennial Reports of the Wyoming State Board of Charities and Reform, 1891-1904*, Wyoming State Archives, Cheyenne.

The Rawlins penitentiary was built on the Auburn principle and consisted of the cell block and several smaller structures surrounded by a wooden fence. Inmates were sentenced to determinate sentences, although a few were regularly pardoned. At first, the prison was run by N. K. Boswell, the leasee who employed the prisoners in his factory. He maintained military discipline, permitting the men to leave their cells to work and eat, and little else. The state provided a chaplain, and purchased a few books for a library, but no instruction was available save that which one inmate could give another. Some medical treatment was available, but a separate hospital facility was not built for several years. Upon his release, each prisoner was given a suit of clothes and five dollars. A perusal of the biennial reports of the State Board of Charity and Reform indicates that prisoner reformation was of little concern during the early years at Rawlins. The reports consist primarily of a financial statement, statistical records of the prisoners, and accounts of progress in buildings improvements and new construction.¹¹

The anonymous author of the following passages first saw the Rawlins penitentiary in the fall of 1904. His antisocial behavior had begun at a tender age. Like many boys he wanted a gun; unlike most, he found a variety of ways to acquire several. As he was growing up, he secured a succession of guns which his parents regularly discovered and destroyed. The rift between parents and son widened with each new incident, until finally "... i promised myself an early leave-taking from the family circle. what i should do for a living after i should leave home occupied no place in my thoughts. i had always liked to work but i lacked skill. i had never been allowed to do anything by myself. what i did know only hastened my undoing. i had become fairly good at riding a horse, and shooting at tin cans." (pp. 1-2. Hereafter quotations from the memoirs will be indicated by an internal page reference. Other than paragraphs, no changes have been made in the text.) His words proved prophetic. Horses and guns were indeed the source of many unpleasant events.

At the age of fifteen, he "... decamped for parts known only to myself. my battle with the world had now begun." (p. 2) His steps carried him to Casper, Wyoming. Finding little of the adventure he sought in Casper, he moved on to Wolton,¹² about sixty-five miles west on the Lander stage road. He found work, and trouble, in Wolton. He was hired by a crusty old Scotchman

¹¹*Biennial Reports, 1901-1915*, and J. C. Schuckers (Inmate No. 401), *Monograph of the State Penitentiary, Laramie, Wyoming, as sent to International Congress of 1900 at Brussels*. Wyoming State Archives, Cheyenne.

¹²A discontinued post office in Natrona County, Wolton no longer appears on Wyoming maps.

he identifies as "McRae." McRae had a reputation for not paying regularly. When the author decided to collect his wages and move on, he found the reputation was richly deserved. McRae refused to pay fifty dollars he owed. The author stayed on his job for an additional two weeks, trying to decide his next step.

... i had no money and there being but small chance of getting any from the scotchman, i was in a fix. i don't believe that if he had given me the money that i would have been content to go away without doing something to get even with him for making me wait so long. McRae had at some time or other picked up a stray bronk belonging to an indian on the shoshone reservation. he had never notified anyone of the horse being in his possession so i foolishly thought that he couldn't do anything about it if i took the horse myself. so i rode away on the stray horse after finding it necessary to steal a new saddle and bridle from McRae. i no doubt could have gotten away with the horse, but the old scotchman could never forget that saddle, after using all the means of which i had any knowledge in concealing my trail, i took a beeline for the sandhills country north of casper. so in my desire for revenge i had committed an act that was sure to react as a boomerang upon my own head but of that i thought nothing. i felt only the satisfaction of having in my possession at least fifty dollars of McRae's property. i never took the law into consideration. if i had i would no doubt have given more attention to a certain individual in casper who at that time was the chief representative of the law in natrona county, namely the sheriff. in the meantime the outraged old scotchman had not been idle. his first move upon missing the outfit was to notify the sheriff at casper. the sheriff of today when notified of the prescence of a horsethief in his territory, nine times out of ten, jumps for the telephone, not so in that day. that sheriff went straight to the barn and a number of good horses which he kept there. there could be but one result for me, a speedy landing in the little jail built in the back of that church-like building that i had noticed a short time before. i had one friend that wanted to get me turned loose, and told the sheriff get a certain lawyer there in town to defend me and he would pay the man for his services. i was taken to the lawyers office for an interview in regards to my coming trial for horse stealing. i didn't think that i could get out of my mixup at no time, and after i left that lawyers office there in that little log building, i knew for sure that i was in for it. i have seen twenty snows since then, but my memory of that short talk with the lawyer is plain as though it happened yesterday. as i went in the door of his office, that professional juggler of laws was pacing back and forth across the room, the while, dictating to a girl stenographer. i sat down on a chair and after a short time the lawyer dismissed the girl and began to talk with the sheriff about my case. the lawyer sat looking at me as though in deep thought, then i was asked how old i was, i told him my correct age which was sixteen this statement was verified by the sheriff. he then turned to the officer and said, i wonder why it is that so many boys who would no doubt have made good citizens and businessmen, should take up a life of evil pursuits. the sheriff said he didn't know the reason for that but lots of them done it anyway. the law buster then made a suggestion that i change my name. he explained why this should be done, it was his idea that my boyhood friends would be less apt to find out my disgrace if i changed my name. he named over a collection of different names, and said i could take my choice of the different names. i then asked him why i should change my name as what i had done wouldn't hurt my reputation much as they always had accused me of worse things

than what i was now charged with. he said, well you haven't been in the penitentiary yet have you? i said no i had never been there. well he said, you will soon be there, and you won't want your old schoolmates and friends to know of it therefore you had better change your name. i asked him if he was sure that i had to go to the penitentiary. yes, there is no way out of it that i know of i can't keep you out of there. i then told him that if i had to go that i had no need for a legal advisor, and told the sheriff that i was ready to go back to the jail. the officer consented readily enough, and i was soon back in the cell. (pp. 3-4)

The Casper jail cell held an interesting collection of society's misfits. In addition to the youthful offender, it contained "a pale faced gambler, an ex-sailor whose face still bore traces of a black eye and other evidences of a recent fistic encounter, and a villainous looking cowpuncher." (p. 4) All had admitted their guilt and were waiting only for the district judge to mete out their sentences. They expected to receive severe sentences, convinced as they were that they were among the worst rogues to plague mankind. The judge arrived all too soon, and called the miscreants before him.

his honor finally turned and entered into a moments conversation with the county attorney, after which he addressed me telling me to arise and come forward, i walked out in front of him and stood there facing him. he then read aloud the charge against me, and asked if i was guilty, i said i was guilty. i was then asked if i had anything to say why sentence should not be pronounced upon me. i answered no. he then began admonishing me for my unlawfull act. at that instant i became possessed of an insane desire to laugh. how i controlled this impulse i don't know. my brain was in a whirl, for a moment i thought i was lost. to have laughed at that time i am sure would have been the worse for me. i came to myself as i was walking to my seat with the sound of the judges voice ringing in my ears. all i could remember was, one year in the penitentiary at the city of rawlins, wyoming.

Within a few days, the prisoners were on their way to the penitentiary.

as we approached the city of rawlins from the north we could see the smoke arising from behind a long ridge which hid the little town from our view. a feeling of depression stole over me which i don't think i have ever since been able to completely shake off. almost the first sight that greeted our eyes as we came into view of the town was the prison itself. the road which we were traveling, passed close to the fence which enclosed the grounds upon which the buildings stood. before we realised it we were through the big iron front door and seated in the room where prisoners are first recieved. after the sheriff had gone through the necessary formalities of turning us over to the prison authorities, we were conducted through a series of doors to a bathroom, given a bath had our clothes taken away and were given in exchange a secondhand suit of stripped illfitting clothes. the shirt made of some kind of stiff hard cloth was decorated on the right breast with a huge number freshly daubed on with some kind of evil smelling black paint or ink. we were then given a dinner of boiled beef and bread. each man was given an empty tomato can to be used

for drinking water, or if he wished there was an abundance of a dark-colored mixture, which for a better name was called coffee. the table and benches were made of plain boards and bore evidence of much scrubbing and washing. the great hall-like building in which we sat seemed cool and damp. complete silence was the order of the day there we could see that very plainly. the only sounds were the pad of swiftly moving feet over the cement floor as white-faced stripped forms flitted in and out through the doorways which looked like black holes in the walls. i felt like i must be entering upon existence in another world. and i really was a prisoner. for the detention of the human animal holds an atmosphere of gloom and depression all its own. even the odor which greeted my nostrils as we entered the prison proper, which is called a cell block, was absolutely strange to the senses. truly it is a world apart. (pp. 4-5)

After dinner, the new prisoner was taken to meet his cellmate; his first view of the cellblock interior had a lasting impact. Constructed of grey sandstone, it "was a good exhibition of the stone mason's art." The walls and floors "appeared as if they were hewn from a single rock." (p. 5) Above each tier of cells was a long iron bar, operated by a single lever, which could simultaneously lock all cells. Each cell door also had a heavy lock turned by a huge iron key.

Upon entering the cell, the youth was confronted by a sullen man who said nothing for interminably long minutes. He finally broke the silence with a few comments about the rules of the prison posted on the wall. Talking was prohibited at all times except in the cell. Signs instead of words were used at the dining table. The dungeon awaited anyone caught speaking.¹³

at that time the prison was run on the lease system. the place was leased about on the same plan as one would rent a farm or other property. a man named Graham had the penitentiary under a lease contract at the time of which i write. he paid the state so much per month or by the year for the use of the convicts. and he paid the expence of running the place, hired his own guards and warden; the state didn't have much to do with it. the prisoner was therefore at the mercy of Graham.¹⁴ he owned the prisoner to the same extent that one owns a dog or a horse. he regarded his human charges as being of less in value than a horse, in as much as there was no first cost connected with this proposition, at least it never cost him anything to secure all the convicts he wanted.

the prisoners were employed in the manufacture of brooms. the shop was run by Scoville Brothers of Ogden Utah. this factory no

¹³The "silent system" which permitted no conversation between prisoners outside their cells, and in some cases required prisoners to shuffle about with their eyes downcast, was an integral part of the Auburn system. McKelvey, *Prisons*, pp. 10-13, 41.

¹⁴The lease system was a frontier innovation, originating in Frankfort, Kentucky, in 1825 as a means of unburdening the state of the cost of prisoner maintenance. Leasees were often accused of prisoner abuses, but the system persisted as the frontier advanced westward. *Ibid.*, pp. 31, 196-197.

doubt yielded a handsome profit to the operators as well as Mr. Graham. the broom shop being the chief source of revenue it was therefore the aim of the management to use every available man at this work. tying brooms was classed as the hardest work in the shop and required considerable skill if it was to be done in the proper manner. this work was usually reserved for the man with a long sentence. it was also used as a sort of punishment even for a short timer in case he should get too tough.

each man had an allotted amount of work to do each day. then he could return to his hole in the wall and spend his time as he chose, making horse hair bridles and so on. when a new beginner entered the shop he was first given a small amount of work to do. This was increased from day to day and was called a running task. this way he would gradually work up to a full days work. if after a reasonable length of time he failed to do the full amount of work required, he was put in the dungeon for a few days. then he could try it again and if he didn't make good was taken back to the dungeon. this would be repeated until the man either done the work or died from the effects of the punishment. they usually did the work.

the foreman of the broom shop was viewed in the light of a true autocrat, as indeed he was. during working hours his jurisdiction was complete. if he wanted a man put in the dungeon he was taken there at once. and if a prisoner happened to be confined in the place of punishment for some offence committed outside the shop, he would have him turned loose if his services were badly needed in the factory. there was considerable work to be done outside the shop in the prison yard and in the cell house. along each tier of cells runs a board walk called a gallery, a prisoner is employed on each of the galleries to sweep the floors and carry drinking water to the men in the cells. he makes his rounds about once every hour carrying a water can and a lighted torch to light the kerocene lamps in the cells. this is known as a soft job and could only be secured by permission of the foreman of the shop. the man in order to get that job had to be stool pigeon, which in the parlance of those denizens of the underworld, means an informer, a carrier of tales. his main job was to pump the prisoners who worked in the broom shop. if he failed to do that to satisfaction of that distinguished gentleman, the foreman, the would be tattler went to the shop himself. . . .

there was one man among the one hundred and fifty prisoners there who boasted of never having been made to work. and it was the truth. his name was Edmundson, serving a life sentence for a murder done in Uintah County. all efforts on the part of the prison authorities to break his spirit only seemed to add strength to his determination to avoid work. at first he absolutely refused to go to work and as a matter of course was put in the dungeon. after being left there for a week or more he was taken out and told to go to the broom shop. he did as he was told in so far as going to the shop was concerned.

for the accommodation of the convicts in the shop, two sticks hung in front of the guard's station. when a prisoner wished to leave the shop he saluted the guard, reached up and took one of the sticks and went out. the first act of Edmundson upon entering the shop was to secure one of the sticks. that was a privilege of which a prisoner could avail himself at any time. there were but two sticks and not more than two men could be absent from the factory at the same time. if both of the sticks happened to be in use, the next man would be allowed to sit upon a bench in front of the guard and wait untill someone came back with one.

Edmundson didn't come back with his stick and the guard reported

him missing to the officers in the cell house. he had thrown the stick away upon reaching the yard and when they located him he was sitting in his cell smoking. he was immediately taken to the dungeon. after about two weeks he was taken out and told to go to the shop and report for work. he went and repeated the performance with the wooden sticks. this was done over and over with the same results. he wouldn't work. they then tried to beat him into submission and on one occasion he was struck on the head with a heavy padlock and seriously injured. but he never gave in. he was a tough looking character, and was even tougher than he looked. he possessed an evil spirit and a caloused heart. . . .

all prisoners were smooth shaven. the hair could be worn in the usual style. if one should be put in the dungeon for any reason whatever the hair was clipped off close. three convict barbers did the work of shaving once a week and the prisoners were allowed to have their hair cut once in about six weeks. on Saturday the barbers would take their tools to the broom shop and shave the men there. three crude hand made barber chairs were kept in the shop for this purpose. the barber chairs were placed a few feet in front of the guard's station. the prisoner would go up there and soap his own face to save time. this way the barbers could finish in one day. the first time they told me to go up and get shaved, I told the guard that I guessed I didn't need a shave as i had no beard. this seemed to make him suddenly go wild. he jumped out of his high arm chair, his fat face purple with rage, as he shouted at me, you aren't running this place, you get in that chair and get shaved. and i got in and had the lather scraped off my face. the barber who shaved me was a nice looking young fellow with a sad face. he told me in a low voice in which he never moved his lips a particle, never mind kid i won't more than scrape the lather off. he was serving a twentyfive year term for killing a man in Crook County. he told me that he never expected to get out of there alive. but he did get released after working on that barber chair for twelve years. he was one of the finest men that i had ever seen and i thought it was a sin to keep him in a hole like that for so long a time. . . . (pp. 6-8)

Church services were held every Sunday in the administrative building, and with a few exceptions, everyone was compelled to attend. The only alternative was the dungeon.

one sunday when the church services were about over we could hear an unearthly yelling and moaning in the cell house. the screaming sounded as though the man was being subjected to some form of most horrible physical torture. the sounds continued as we marched out over the draw bridge. from this vantage point we could see directly an interesting scene. there was one convict who had been pestering the prison doctor with complaints of an ingrowing toenail which he claimed bothered him to such an extent that he couldn't work. He was tying brooms and the doctor said he was just stalling in order to escape work. he was put in the dungeon but that had no effect. every morning when the doctor came he would be the first one on the list. the doctor would ask him the nature of his ailment and the man would complain of the sore toe. it had finally gotten on the doctor's nerves so that he decided to fix the fellow up. the doctor had given orders to have him kept in the cell during church and as soon as we were all in the chapel they brought him down stairs and under the doctors instructions was lain on his back upon a small table which stood in front of the kitchen door. this table was used to set pans on during meal time. the entire kitchen force was

then called out and ordered to hold the man down. this was done to the satisfaction of all concerned. especially the doctor. the doctor of medicine then proceeded to take out a pair of pliers and a pocket knife. with the aid of these instruments he proceeded to split the offending toe nail down through the center. and pull out the pieces. this naturally explained the yelling. i don't remember of hearing anyone complain of bad toe nails after that.

the doctor was employed by Graham. he was supposed to visit the place every morning but sometimes he didn't show up at all. there was only one man that missed him when he failed to arrive on time. that was the foreman of the broom shop. the main object in having a doctor was to keep the men at work. he allways came early in the morning so that in case any of the convicts should remain in their cells on the sick list, he could send them to the shop at the earliest possible moment. for a hospital they had a single room in the upper story of the administration building. that room contained an iron cage with cells like an ordinary jail. the prisoners refered to that place as the butcher room. i never knew of a convict to go there for treatment and come back to the cell house. what disposition was made of the ones who were unfortunate enough to be taken there, i don't know. . . .

at the time of which i write the prisoner with no infraction of the prison rules to his credit, was given a reduction of time for good conduct. the maximum allowance of time off, was fifty days on each year and an additional five days for every three years. this was better for the man serving a short sentence than it was for the long time. i had to serve ten days and ten months for my sentence of one year. the time seemed to pass by quick enough to me. the day for my release finally came. i was first sent to my friend the barber, who cut my hair and gave a little good advyce as to my future conduct. which i immediately forgot of course. i was then taken out through the same doors which had closed behind me ten months before. i was handed a suit of clothes, underwear, hat, shirt, and shoes. in fact a complete outfit. these i put on, the clothes would hardly hold together long enough to get them on. the whole outfit cost possibly ten dollars. the warden handed me a five dollar bill which was the amount allways given to the discharged convict by the magnanimous Mr. Graham. five dollars by using the greatest economy could be made to last possibly three days. a man on emerging from that place was usually in poor physical condition, even after a stay of only ten months. they only gave the man enough money to last about three days and if he did find employment, would be absolutely unfit for any kind of hard manual labor. unless he had money of his own outside of the five dollars donated by Graham, he must find an employer, and that quickly. i thought little of those things that august day as i walked out from the damp prison air into glorious sunshine of this enchanted land. . . . (pp. 9-10)

As he walked through the penitentiary gate, the inmate/author could only think of putting his stay behind bars out of his mind. He strode out into the southwestern Wyoming desert, and then, like a horse unsaddled after a hard ride, he lay down and rolled in the dust. Satisfactorily removing the new look from his prison-issued suit, he set out to put many miles between himself and the penitentiary.

His trail led first to employment as a sheepherder, but before the sun had disappeared many times beyond the Wyoming landscape, he was again in trouble.

For two years he remained out of the penitentiary but his freedom was not the result of exemplary behavior. The solitary life of a shepherd did not fit his restless nature. Stealing the rifle of a fellow herder, he turned his back on honest employment, and engaged in a variety of crimes and attempted crimes. Criminal skill and the ineffective frontier law establishment permitted him to brazenly avoid capture.

The now-free author's adventures began when he was arrested near Douglas, Wyoming, for stealing the rifle. He quickly escaped that jail with a Mexican colleague, and unable to succeed in honest labor, he turned to horse stealing. He and a partner rounded up a small herd of someone else's horses in eastern Wyoming, and sold them in Nebraska. With money in his pockets, and far too much confidence in his criminal talents, he left his partner, and set off for Chicago. The Windy City's features appealed to the amoral youth, but he soon learned that stealing horses in Wyoming did not prepare him for a life of crime in the big city. Deciding that he could be more successful as a larger frog in a smaller pond, he returned to Sheridan, Wyoming.

Sheridan offered the fledgling criminal more promising opportunities. Here, he worked out a train robbery scheme which was prematurely aborted when his partner lost his nerve. After a bar brawl in Sheridan, he fled into the Big Horn Mountains. In that unlikely setting, he found a job and an employer whom he liked. He worked for a few pleasant weeks building a dam at Dome Lake, but his employer's wife was suspicious, and when news from Sheridan arrived, he was compelled to move on. Following these few peaceful weeks, our anonymous narrator embarked upon an odyssey which led from stolen horses to aimless train rides, back to stolen horses, and finally to capture. Before a bit of drunken carelessness landed him in the Casper jail for a second time, he traveled from Dome Lake to Thermopolis and then to Worland. Finding Wyoming too restrictive, he embarked via train for Billings and Toluca, Montana. With law enforcement officials using the telegraph to keep up with him, he switched trains often. The path let as far east as Alliance, Nebraska, and then did an about face taking him several hundred miles west to Green River and Wolton, Wyoming. He committed a robbery in the latter community, and turned back east for Casper to enjoy the fruits of his crime. Swilling stolen whiskey along the way, he arrived in Casper with a head so muddled his instinct for avoiding capture abandoned him. He decided to cash some stolen checks and purchase more whiskey. He woke from his binge in the Casper jail, and after an unsuccessful escape attempt, he was given two years and six months in the Rawlins penitentiary to reflect upon his escapades.

Several familiar faces, including that of the warden, greeted the

prodigal prisoner. But there were some changes. Several men sported mustaches, and one venerable figure graced his face with a full beard. A further look revealed that Edmundson, whom the author had known on his previous visit, was continuing his obstinate resistance to authority.

Shortly after his arrival, the author was taken to the broom factory. Once there, he struck up an acquaintance with another recent arrival named Richardson. Rich, as he was known behind the walls, was doing life for killing a man near Gillette. Rich was a moody character, given to periods of depression when he might turn either to religion or an attempt at homicide. His fellows came to respect Rich's moods, and to give him a wide berth.

After a man had been in the prison three months without marring his record, he was given a suit of grey clothes to replace his stripes. Our author had just received a grey coat when an idle musing cost him the coat and consigned him to a sojourn in the dungeon. The wrong man (a stoolie) heard him mumble that he did not care if he ever learned to make brooms. The warden translated that statement into a temporary diet of bread and water.

After seven days, the careless comment was considered rectified, and the prisoner returned to his cell. His first night out of the dungeon was most eventful. It began with a seemingly trivial incident, but ended in tragedy. A prisoner with a life sentence was seen near the kitchen, although he did not regularly work there. Other prisoners reported that the lifer was filling in for the head cook who was ill. This did not seem to portend trouble, but soon the warden had his hands full.

Each morning, the cooks rose at 4:30 so that the prisoners could be fed and on the job early. On his first morning out of the dungeon, the author was wakened by the cooks being let out, and then, just as he was again dropping off to sleep, he heard muffled voices followed by a flash of fire and a deafening explosion. This was followed by a man's voice, "as though begging for mercy . . ." and a second explosion.

"i was almost deafened by the concussion which was terirfic in the close air. Probably a minute elapsed during which i could hear nothing but a ringing in my ears. then came a roar from the back end of the cell house . . . other shots followed in quick succession then an interval of complete silence . . . then i heard another shot which sounded hollow as if it had been down in a barrel." (p. 56)

Thus far, all the shooting had come from within the cellblock. Now the guards outside opened up. Buckshot and rifle slugs slammed into the building and through the windows. Although there was no answering fire, any movement by the prisoners brought forth another volley.

Later, after everything had quieted down, the author managed to piece together the story of what had happened. The lifer who had

earlier been observed by the bakery had somehow obtained a gun and some dynamite. He had planned to force the guard to open the laundry building, which had one wall with direct access to the outside, and then dynamite his way to freedom. The guard threw the key out of his reach rather than let him escape. The frustrated lifer shot the guard, and tried to blast his way out. When that failed, he took his own life. The prisoners were kept in their cells, except to work and eat, for several days after the attempt.¹⁵

The warden resigned shortly after the shootings, and was replaced by Hillenbrand, the chief cell house guard. Hillenbrand was respected by many of the prisoners including the author. He attempted to make life more comfortable for his charges, but his efforts were often negated by the leaseholder, Graham. The prisoners continued to feel that Graham saw them only as chattel kept to do labor. Stories about his cruelty and callous system circulated constantly.

there was one broom machine that was regarded by the convicts as unlucky. it was a good machine but nobody cared to use the thing if there was a way around it. one fellow worked for a long time and it began to look as though the jinx had departed for good. he was a quiet mannered fellow about forty years of age and apparently had good health. he had for a cellmate a slim curly haired young man, who everybody called Curly. they sat right across the table from me at meal time. one morning about ten o'clock i noticed curly's partner leave his machine and go to the shop guard and get a pass to the cell house. he passed my machine on his way out but he didn't look up or say anything. at noon as we sat at the table, curly's cellmate was missing. we didn't think anything about that for we just supposed that he was sick, he had been allright that morning. one of the waiters came along filling our cups with coffee, and as he leaned forward with his coffee can to fill my cup, i heard him whisper to curly. your cellmate went to the butcher room. curly's face went white but he didn't move a muscle to show that he had heard the whispered words of the waiter. curly didn't get to see his partner anymore, neither did anybody else in there. the next day we heard he was dead. and that was the last of him.

a short time after that another man was put to work on that machine. he was a likely looking subject for working of the jinx. he was a mexican and seemed to be in poor health and was afflicted with what i always called quick consumption. the big fellow went down hill fast and in about a months time was in such condition that he could hardly walk. he was given permission to walk in the yard for a certain length of time each day. he walked around the yard with his shoulders all drooped over and one hand held against his chest and seemed in a bad way . . .

he told Rich (who was experiencing a religious rebirth at this time, and had become a stoolie) that he knew for sure that if he didn't receive medical treatment soon that he would die. he said that the prison doctor could cure him up if he wanted to. he was sure of that,

¹⁵This incident, which occurred in 1908, is not mentioned in the 1907-1908 *Biennial Report of the State Board of Charities and Reform*. Nothing in the record indicates there had been any trouble at the prison.

and he was going to try and get that man to fix him up if he could. he had conceived a definite plan by which he could (get) results if nothing more. he was going to be cured regardless as to how his plans were carried out.

he confided his health getting scheme to his spiritual advisor, Richardson. on the next morning when the prison veterinary came in the cell house, he was going in there and talk to him. he would tell him that he would soon die if something wasn't done for him. he was then going to ask the doctor if he would fix him up or not. but he was to have a definite answer. if the doctor said that he would fix him up, well and good. but if the reverse was the case, then the mexican would, to use his own words, fix him up quick. and he showed Rich his knife which was a full sized broom knife. Rich hastily excused himself from the presence of the mexican. Rich couldn't possibly allow anything like what the mexican contemplated to occur. he was now warned away from the acts of evil and violence for all time. if he allowed that to happen he would be guilty of a gross neglect of duty. so he hastened to tell the warden of the mexican war plans. the warden as a matter of course told the doctor.

the following morning when the doctor came to the prison the swarthy son of Mexico was there waiting for him. but the brave doctor was taking no chances that morning so he stayed out in the front office and viewed his prospective patients through the little look-out window. the mexican was first to consult the man of medicine. he spoke to the mexican and asked him how he was feeling and so on. he seemed greatly concerned about the physical condition of the man. well, he said, you just wait until i get through with these other cases and i will fix you up. and here take this, he said, it will brace you up and make you feel better, and he handed the man a drink of whiskey through the bars of the lookout window. after he had disposed of the other cases he called the man over to the window and talked nice to him and said that he had better go to the hospital where he could get better care as he was in a very bad condition and that the sooner he went to the hospital the better. and the mexican said alright i thank you doctor. he smiled at Rich as he passed out through the iron doors into the outer office on his way to the butcher shop. he thought that he was traversing the road to perfect health i suppose. and Rich helped to make the mexican last hours a little easier anyway. what the man didnt know he wouldnt worry about. that was the last that anybody seen of the mexican.¹⁶ (pp. 58-60)

After wearing striped clothes for an additional three months, our anonymous law-breaker was once again sent to the tailor shop for grey clothes. Three days later he again fell from grace.

i sat near the farthest end of the dining table and that, and my unruly temper was my undoing. there was one waiter that did nothing but carry bread to the table. he had a large wooden tray which he would load full of bread and come along the long table and let the prisoners help themselves. he would always start at the end nearest the kitchen door and by the time he arrived at the other end all the bread would be gone. he then went back and filled the thing up again and done the same as before. those fellows would eat the bread

¹⁶Medical care was the responsibility of the leasee. The *Biennial Reports* contain no comments regarding its quality or quantity.

as fast as he could carry it out to them. when the bread man got to my end there was nothing left in the box but a lot of crusts off the ends of the loaves. even that would have been alright had the crusts been fresh, but they must have been the accumulation of at least two weeks. i don't think that a diamond cutter could have made a scratch on the softest one in that box. not in six months of steady work. that had been going on for a long time which made the thing worse.

in the morning i would get nothing but the old hard crusts. i would think about that all the time untill noon and then it would be the same thing over. on the day before i got into it, i had taken one of the sinkers out of the box and after a futile attempt to break the thing up, i took my fork and scratched a brand on one side of it. that operation required all my time at the table. but i couldn't get anything to eat anyway so i didn't loose by the deal, but i did the next day at dinner time. i reached into the box and took one crust. and i didn't draw a blank. it was the one from the day before, according to the brand. that was the limit so i thought. but i soon found out that there was no such thing as a limit, not in that place. i spoke aloud and said, well, i don't think that i will get this one anymore. and i then exerted all my strength in an effort to break it apart. but that couldn't be done very handy. i put it on my plate and poured coffee over it, when it had become saturated with the coffee i tore it in pieces and leaving the plate full of coffee soaked bread i arose from the table and went up stairs to my cell. i had left the table without saluting the guard. that was good for a through ticket to the dungeon at all times. when i got to the cell there lay a new grey coat. (p. 60)

The warden soon learned of the prisoner's demonstrated dissatisfaction with the cuisine, and ordered him to the dungeon until he mellowed his opinion. He was taken to a completely bare cell and chained to the door for nine days.

a few days after i had been in the hole, i had been out of the shop on an errand and had just started up the stairs when i met a man coming out, he was serving a life sentence for killing a man and had been there about two years. his wife lived in Rawlins and came over to the prison quite often to see him. she had been doing everything in her power to get him released but so far had been unsuccessful. when i met him there on the stairs he had a written pass to the cell house in his hand. i seen the slip of paper and i asked him in a joking way if he had a pardon. i knew him fairly well and as we were partly out of sight of the guards we paused there and talked for a moment. he said that his wife was out in the wardens office and wanted to see him. she told him that the governor had absolutely refused to grant a pardon in his case. he didn't come to the shop again that day. the next morning he remained in his cell and after the prisoners had all went to the shop, he walked up the stairs to the highest gallery and stepped over the railing and elevating his hands after the fasion of a high diver, and which he really was, he dove to the cement floor thirty feet below. he landed on the top of his head and died instantly. a few minutes before that he had remarked to my cellmate that he was getting awfull tired of staying in that place. a negro afterwards adopted the same method of ending his earthly tribulations. the black man evidently thought that the cement floor was too hard a landing place so he chose one of the long dining tables as a likely place to try out the shock absorbing qualities of his torpedo shaped skull. the prison carpenter repaired the table, and the family vetinary tried to

patch up the colored man, but he never came to after his head went through that one by twelve inch pine board . . .¹⁷ (pp. 61-62)

Not every malcontent was sent to the dungeon. Hillenbrand proved he was flexible and could make the punishment fit the crime.

there was a young fellow there but little more than a boy, possibly eighteen years old, who wanted to be tough so one day he thought he could see a fine chance to show his colors. there had been a half dozen men sent to the dungeon for some offense or other. that filled the hole to its capacity. the youngster thought that if he should get real hard boiled right at that time he could get away with it, for the hole was filled and there would be no other place for them to put him. so he went up and told the shop guard that he refused to work any more, and sat down. the guard wrote out a pass to the cell house and gave it to the boy and told him to go on in, and that he didn't have to work if he didn't want to. the guard had also wrote on the pass, to the effect that the boy had refused to work and to tell the warden about it. the hard boiled kid gave the pass to the guard and started to his cell. he was ordered to wait right there for a few minutes. the warden was right there at the window and the guard handed the pass over to him. he read it over and asked to see the man that had refused to work. they brought the boy around in front of the window and the warden looked at him, and said to the guard, send him out here i want to see that young man. they unlocked the door leading out to the front office and let the boy go through. the warden was right there waiting for him. he turned that boy over his knee and administered a thorough spanking. two minutes later the hard boiled young man, now soft boiled, came into the broom shop in a hurry, his face was flushed and he seemed to be short of breath as if he had lately indulged in some form of strenuous physical exertion. he took the nearest way to his former place of work and made up for lost time. he was a most efficient worker from that time on, at least while he was there. (p. 63)

Malingering and indolence on the part of the prisoners was to be expected. Some men however, were willing to take extreme steps to avoid work. The anonymous memoirs record more than one case of attempted and actual self-mutilation to avoid labor.

there was a fellow on the machine next to me, that was the most indolent man in the factory. he had employed every scheme that his sluggish brain could devise in the effort to escape work on a tying machine. but he couldn't make any headway. he had to work there and there was only one way that he could escape it. and that was worse yet. in tying brooms he was compelled to stand on his feet, but that was a lot better than being chained to the door so that he couldn't sit down at all. he told my cellmate, who he called Slim, that he would be willing to have a hand cut off if by doing it he could escape tying brooms.

¹⁷Using the *Biennial Reports*, it is not possible to determine the number of prisoners who committed suicide. For most of the years under consideration, the only clue that men died in the prison is the line "burial expense for . . . state prisoners."

each man in the shop was furnished a wash basin and towel. once a week they issued a small piece of soap to everybody. it was of the ordinary brown colored laundry soap. the lazy man ate a considerable quantity of that in hopes that he would get good and sick, and then the doctor might excuse him from work. but the soap didn't do the work. he was sick allright but he had been stalling so much that when he did get a little under the weather, he had to just grin and bear it.

one day he told Slim that he had about decided to cut off one of his fingers and then they would have to take him off the machine. well, said Slim, why don't you go ahead and do it, well, said he, when it comes to a show down i haven't sufficient nerve to perform the operation myself. he asked Slim if he would cut off the surplus finger. Slim agreed to accomodate him at any time. he asked Slim if he was joking or if he really would do it. Slim said well just decide which finger you want to cut off and put it up here on this piece of wood. the fellow thrust forward his right hand with the index finger extended. Slim said well put it up here i can't cut it off that way. he eyed my cellmate in a speculative manner, and then slowly raised his hand and placed the finger on the wooden framework of the machine, Slim held a new broom knife in his hand, and as the finger came to a rest on the wood, he made a quick chopping stroke with the keen edge of the knife. the victim sprang back with a howl of fright and pain. about a half inch of the first joint of the finger lay there on the machine. i could see it plainly from where i stood and watched the performance. the fellow with the cut finger ran up to the guard and said that he was bleeding to death fast and wanted medical attention fast. he was sent into the cell house where the finger was bandaged. when he showed it to the doctor the next day, that dignitary promptly asked him if he was left handed. upon recieving a negative answer, he then inquired how it come that his right hand had been cut while holding the knife handle. he accused him of doing it on purpose in order to get out of work. he was back on the machine before the finger was entirely healed. he was a failure as a broom tyer but he had to stand there and go through the motions anyway. he gave up after the amputation of his finger and apparently resigned himself to his fate. . . . (pp. 64-65)

In addition to providing the narrative of one man's experiences behind bars, the memoirs present a view of general prison routine and prisoner attitudes. There were times other than Sundays, for example, when the broom factory operation was suspended and the prisoners received a brief respite.

on the fifteenth of the month the prisoners were permitted to buy a few things from town. that is if he had the money. anything in the line of eatables that had to be cooked were barred. on holidays such as the fourth of july, thanksgiving and christmas the convict was allowed to order one pound of butter. it was the aim of the management to prevent any kind of grease to come into the possession of the prisoners. if they could get grease they would be continually be making fires in the cells, in an effort to cook something or other. they were not allowed to have currency in their possession. if a prisoner had money on being committed to the prsion it was taken away and he was given credit for the amount on the prison books. then they furnished a form of check for the accommodation of the prisoners called a transfer, that could be used in case the prisoners wanted to deal among themselves. i never heard of any cases of an account being overdrawn. to have a transfer returned marked, no

funds, really meant no fun, for the one that wrote it out. all prisoners who had money to their credit on the prison books were given a statement once a month. and they were always correct.

on the first wednesday of each month the prison doors were open to the public, visitors could go through the place at any time from eight oclock in the morning till three in the afternoon. excepting the noon hour. on that day the prison librarian, who as an old man doing life, would exhibit the horse hair bridles and other things made by the convicts for the inspection of the sightseers from the outside world. the long dining table on the south side of the cell house where the light was best was used for the purpose. the table was covered with a white cloth on which was placed things of leather, horse hair and beads. the morose old lifetimer stood behind the display table and explained the process of manufacture of the articles on the table to any visitor who was curious enough to ask questions. everything was equipped with a price tag for the benefit of anybody who wished to secure some of the things as a curio. and there were many usefull things on display.

the visitors, and especially the women, were curiously interested in the method employed in making brooms. i liked to make brooms, after my stay in the dungeon, and naturally made good ones. and it just happened that i was working in the very place where all the visitors came along. i was also making a real pretty broom, if there is any such thing, while the other men along that row of machines were all tying plain brooms. mine were white enamel handles and velvet finished. they always stopped there and looked. the women would chatter and take on at a great rate. there was much whispering and so on. i always thought on those occasions that they must be telling each other what an evil looking character i was, and wondering what henious crime i had committed. and that would have been only natural for my appearance at the best must have been anything but prepossessing. but while visiting day was a trying ordeal for me, i couldn't very well escape standing there and tying brooms . . . (pp. 66-67)

Smuggling a variety of items including weapons and escape devices was standard prisoner behavior. Food, perhaps because it was not abundant, also received a good deal of attention.

i knew one fellow that had made his way into the kitchen and got possession of a pie. he concealed the thing under his coat and walked out of the kitchen and started to his cell. the pie was freshly baked and still quite hot. he had to take it right at that time or not get it at all. and it was difficult to carry. there was one of the guards sitting at the desk looking directly at him as he emerged from the kitchen door. and that guard had an eye like an eagle. every move a prisoner made was suspicious to him. he overlooked but very little. and his eagle eye instantly detected something wrong in the actions of the man with the pie. he stopped the man and demanded that he unbutton his coat. the convict done as the guard ordered. the guard said that he would take charge of the pie himself, alright, said the convict, and slammed the hot pastry squarely into the officers face.

it was strictly against the rules to carry anything away from the table. all the prisoners would try to steal bread and take it to their cells. that guard who had the pie thrown in his face was an expert at detecting anyone carrying bread or anything. me and the fellow that i was in with always got away with as much bread as we possibly could. two slices were all we could carry without being caught. we would have to pass within three feet of the sharpeyed guard. but we

were never caught. we saved up all we could get for a week at one time. and then ate it all at one time. that way we could have enough for once anyway. (p. 68)

After serving twenty-six months, the author began to anticipate his release. With the normal allotment of time off, he expected freedom in two months. As the day approached, a rumor began circulating that he would be re-arrested at the gate. Finally, the awaited day arrived, but

. . . as i stepped into the turnkeys office after changing clothes i seen two men standing just inside the big front door. they looked intently at me and then they opened the door and they went outside. i recognized them as the sheriff of Rawlins, Carbon County and his deputy. as i passed out the front door they stood at the bottom of the steps waiting. the sheriff informed me that he had a warrant for my arrest. i couldn't see as how that was all necessary. what he should have was an ambulance. i had to stand edge wise to the wind to escape from blowing over. i was in much the same condition as would be a victim of typhoid fever. in the first stages of convalescence . . . (p. 69)

The author was taken to the Big Horn county jail in Basin City to be held for trial. It was already well filled when he arrived. Five cattlemen were awaiting trial for the murder of three sheepmen. At the turn of the century, conflict between cattleraisers and sheepherders threatened to sear a deep brand into the soul of the new state of Wyoming which would take generations to heal. Woolgrowers were moving onto public ranges previously used to graze only cattle, and cattlemen responded by killing sheep and—on more than one occasion—sheepherders. In 1905, the sheepmen responded by forming the Wyoming Woolgrowers Association. Two years later, the organization publically offered a \$1000 reward for the arrest and conviction of sheepcamp raiders.

The capstone on a decade of violence was placed in 1909, when two wealthy woolgrowers, Joe Allemand and Joe Emge and one of their herders, Joe Lazier, were killed by a band of night-riding cattlemen. Seven men were arrested for the crime and two of them exchanged full testimony for their freedom. The remaining five, George Sabin, M. A. Alexander, Thomas Dixon, Herbert Brink, and Ed F. Easton, were awaiting trial when the author joined them.¹⁸ The prisoners were confined in close quarters, and with little to do, they got to know each other quite well. Later, they renewed their acquaintance at the state penitentiary. Brink received a life term, and Sabin and the others received sentences ranging from three to twenty-six years.

While the trial was going on, the author, suffering from what he said was typhoid fever, was confined to a hospital. Slowly, he

¹⁸Larson, *Wyoming*, p. 369-371.

regained his health. He spent the remainder of the winter in jail, but like the flowers of spring, with the first warm winds, he fled his winter's bonds. Together with a willing companion, he headed east across the bleak high plains. Their first stop was Manderson, South Dakota, where provisions were available from his partner's son. After waiting out a late spring blizzard in an abandoned coal mine, he split with his traveling companion. Some inner, unexplainable force was drawing him once more toward the scene of his earlier crimes. He found work for a time as a railroad construction worker near Worland, and then moved on to Thermopolis. But, he was on the run, and no place could be home for long. Stealing a horse, he headed for Shoshone and Casper, and then on to Wolton. Always, his past followed him. Newspapers telling of his escape overtook him in Waltman, and he headed back into the Big Horn Mountains. For a time he thought he had again eluded the law. Breathing a satisfied sigh, he started down from his mountain retreat. Suddenly Sheriff Alston and a posse appeared directly in his path. With no hope of escape he surrendered and was taken to the Sheridan jail.

From Sheridan, he was taken under heavy guard to Casper for a third command appearance before the district judge there. The charge was horse-stealing, and the judge, who had earlier admonished the miscreant to give up his criminal ways, immediately recognized him, and was not prone to leniency. With little fanfare he set down a ten-year sentence, and our author found himself once more on his way to Rawlins.

The prisoners were taken by train to Rawlins. As they neared their destination, the author tried to secrete several dimes in his mouth, primarily to prove he could do it. The dimes would be of little use behind bars. He almost succeeded, but the prison had a new warden named Glunz, who was very thorough, and he found the dimes before the prisoners were taken to the cell house.

the next day i was taken to the bertillion room¹⁹ and there they didn't overlook any characteristics in my make-up that would aid them in any way to identify me at any time in the future. after that was over with and i had been sent back to the cell house, the warden called me to the place where prisoners were interviewed by the warden, and talked to me. he said, that all sheriffs who come to the prison had told him that i would be a source of much trouble to him as long as i was there. and that one in particular, i afterwards found out that his name was Alston, had told him that in any event he was not to treat me good for if he did that i would sure give him the worst of it in return. but, the warden said, what they say won't influence

¹⁹In the early 1880s a Frenchman, Alphonse Bertillon, developed a system for identifying recidivists by measuring the bone structure of their body and comparing the results to a chart of standardized features. The system gained widespread acceptance in the United States at the end of the nineteenth century. McKelvey, *Prisons*, p. 122.

me the least bit, if you behave yourself i will treat you just as good as i possibly can. i told him that i didn't know whether i could be good or not as they would no doubt put me on a broom machine and i didn't think that i wanted to ty brooms for ten years. well, he said, i don't know anything about whether they will put you on a broom tying machine or not, but if they do, i would advise you to go ahead and do the work and say nothing because you won't have to do that kind of work for ten years. (p. 91)

More than once the author was involved in escape attempts. He and the men around him were serving long terms and the prospects of an early departure, and the adventure of conspiring to escape made the days pass more quickly. On one occasion, his cellmate told him of an attempt which would involve ten men.

... he told me all about the plans of the fellow who was engineering the proposed escape. they were at work right at that time in cutting a hole through the corrugated iron ceiling of the cell house. in the alley between the two top galleries the ceiling wasn't over ten feet above the gallery walk, they had rigged up something to stand upon while working and were at that time trying to cut through the heavy planking underneath the corrugated iron. they had taken off a section of the iron and had arranged it so that it could be replaced untill they could get another chance to work. they had been doing all their work while the other prisoners were out in the yard. they had lookout posts to warn them against the approach of guards. they had stolen a saw from the carpenter shop and one day while they were busy working somebody sounded an alarm. the fellow who was doing the sawing became so excited and fell from his perch. he threw out his arms to try to catch himself and in so doing swung the saw around in sword fashion. the result of that was that he narrowly missed decapitation of one of his fellow conspirators. they scattered and ran like rabbits. the fellows with the saw tried to conceal it under his coat as he ran down the gallery. he met a guard face to face. the guard asked him what was wrong, and what he was running for. he evidently didn't notice the saw, which was projecting about a foot from under the bottom of his coat. the guard passed on and the prisoner got away with his saw. the next day they discovered the hole in the ceiling. the main actors in the attempted escape, claimed that a prisoner named lindsay gave the thing away. but that was doubtfull because every prisoner in the place, including Brink, knew of the goings on. Lindsay was serving forty years for a cold blooded murder committed in converse, county. he had assumed the somewhat doubtful honor of calling himself, little tom horn. he was noted in the prison as a stool pidgeon.

when Glunz found out for sure just who had done the work of cutting the hole in the ceiling he played even with them in a sort of unique way. he secured a quantity of cement and instructed the would be get aways to mix the concrete. when that was done to his satisfaction he had them carry it up the stairs of the galleries and then up on a ladder to the attic of the cell house. he engineered the laying of about two feet of concrete along the floor of the attic which constituted the ceiling of the alley below. one or two of the ring leaders were also required to wear a ball and chain attached to their ankle for about ten days. that was about the last attempt at wholesale jail delivery while Glunz was there.

the next spring after i went there, we heard considerable talk of the prison being taken over by the state. the lease system was to be abandoned and the penitentiary would be under the direct supervision

of the state government officials. when the prisoners found out for sure that Graham administration was ended they were excited about the change in the personal of the prison . . . the change was effected suddenly²⁰ and it was a change. where Graham had went to the extreme in rigid prison discipline, the new management went their length in the other direction. the inevitable reaction almost took their breath, meaning the political party who had elected to make the change. one day when we went into the cell house for dinner. Brink asked me if i could guess who had been appointed by the governor as the new warden. i couldn't begin to think, so he told me that Mr. Felix Alston of Basin City had received the appointment and would take possession of the wardens office on the first day of may. i had a vision of a long narrow hide stretched up on the stockade wall to dry in the sun i figured that if i watched my hand that i might be able to wear that pelt for three months longer, but that would be about all. (pp. 94-95)

Felix Alston's term as warden did not have an auspicious beginning. He found a prison in ferment, and was able to do little to change the situation. Dissension and talk of escape kept everyone in turmoil. According to the author, he seemed to be unable to establish firm, evenhanded control. Arriving on Arbor Day, he was confronted by striking inmates who wanted the day off. When Alston failed to take decisive action, the die was cast. Later he compounded his problems by inviting several prisoner-leaders into his office to bury the hatchet, but neglecting Paseo, a Mexican whom he had helped convict, thereby damaging that man's prestige among his peers. Paseo vowed to make Alston recognize him.

the mexican proposed that we make a break away without waiting for help of any kind. he had formed a plan by which he said we could get away from the prison at any time. Alston came into the cell house every friday to transact some business there. Paseo proposed that we arm ourselves with knives and when the warden come in at one oclock, which he allways did on fridays, that we capture him and under threats, of inflicting diverse forms of butchery upon his person with the wicked looking broom knives, force him to accompany us to the big gate in the stockade, and he would be forced to tell the wall guard to open the gate. there were three men who knew of the plans. Paseo myself and another long tmier. two days before the thing was to come off we were out in the yard and were talking about what we were going to do. i had previously told them that if there was more than three men taken in on the deal that i could be counted out. Paseo told another mexican about it and said that we had aquired a valuable (addition) to our crew of would be cut throats. i said i can't see where you could have increased the force any, because i have resigned. well they said we will do it anyway . . .

on thursday i didn't go to the broom shop. i remained in my cell, supposedly on the sick list . . . when the doctor came in the cell house that morning i didn't go down to see him. when a prisoner remained in as i had done, he was supposed to go and see the doctor when he

²⁰On April 15, 1912, the State Board of Charities and Reform purchased all property on the penitentiary grounds belonging to Otto Gramm, and took over management of the prison. *Biennial Report, 1911-1912*, p. 20.

came. if the man pronounced you OK then you had to go out to the shop, if he said you was sick he marked your name on the list of the ones who were excused from work on that day. i didn't care to talk to any doctor. i very seldom stayed in. and when i did i figure on excusing myself on that day. about noon i was down on the ground floor and Alston came to the lookout window and called to me, i went there and he asked me why i wasn't in the broom shop. i said that i was sick. he asked me if i had seen the doctor. i said no, that i didn't need to see a doctor as i had excused myself for that day. well he said, that there's only one way that you can get out of work without the doctor excusing you, and that is to go to the hole. i said alright the hole suits me if it does you. i walked away and figured that there wouldn't be any more to it. but the guard come and told me that Alston said for him to put me in the hole. and he did . . . the next morning i was taken out and after i had went up to my cell the guard come up and said that Alston had given orders for me to be locked up in the cell. the guard said that he would have to come and unlock the door about fifty times each day to let my cellmate in and out. so he said that if i would agree to stay there he would leave the door unlocked. he said that somebody had told Alston that a certain bunch of prisoners had plotted to assassinate him, and that he had ordered me and Paseo locked up.

the man who had been my cellmate at the time of the attempted escape through the roof of the cell house had been unexpectedly released on parole shortly after Alston came there. a fellow named Morgan, who had been in the Casper Jail when i was there, was not in the same cell with me. when he first came there they had given him a good job in the cell house. he had gotten drunk on a quantity of hair tonic which he had secured from the barbers and been sent to the broom shop to work. he hated the work about as bad as any man that i had ever run across. he remained in every morning on the sick list. he was a big husky fellow and didn't look sickly. but he managed to escape the shop part of the time. one day when he was laying off he seen Alston in the yard and asked him for a job outside the wall. Alston said that he would give him the job outside. he said that he had to go out in his office right away but that for Morgan to go out to the gate and wait there and he would be right out and escort him through the gate. Morgan was tickled to death and went out to the gate. while he was waiting there for the warden, he saw the foreman of the shop standing in the shop door looking at him. the foreman didn't like Morgan much because he was always trying to get out of work in the shop. Morgan waived his hand at the foreman in a goodbye salute. just then the deputy warden came in through the gate and went to the shop. he stopped at the door and talked to the foreman a few minutes. he then returned to where Morgan was standing and told him to go on in the shop and go to work and stay there. Morgan told him that he didn't have to go to work in the shop that the warden had given him a job outside. the deputy then used physical force to project Morgan in the general direction of the shop. he shoved him through the door with instructions to not come out untill quitting time. Morgan tried for a week to get to talk with Alston but that individual was just about as easy to run down as would be a fox. Morgan told me that he was going out to the shop and thrust his hand into a machine and get crippled so that he wouldn't have to work. he had it figured out so that the injury would look worse than it really was. but it turned out just the reverse. he got his hand crushed in a horrible manner. if they hadn't just happened to have one of the best doctors, and men, the doctors name was McGee, he would have lost his hand. but he escaped the shop.

Morgan had one ambition. and that was to be tough. but he was just a little short on the chief requisite, which is sometimes called nerve. he resorted to the use of alcohol and narcotics to keep aglow the feeble spark of courage in his sickly heart. he had become a drug addict. he would go around to the prisoners and collect all the headache tablets that he could get and eat them. they contained a very small amount of opium or some other kind of junk such as dope fiends use. when the doctor found out what disposition was being made of the tablets he refused to give out any more . . .

there was one man sent there after Alston came who was sentenced to be hanged. the man's name was Seng, he was sent from Uintah county.²¹ they locked him in the cell that Paseo had been in and after he had been there a short time he was granted indefinite stay, they let him out and put him to work as a sort of assistant to the prison doctor. when he made his daily trip to the prison . . .

he (Seng) always stood next to the guards desk when the other prisoners were at the dining table . . . he stood there with his chest thrown out and leaning back against the railing, as though he might be the commander in chief of the army inspecting troops. he would look each convict up and down as he passed by. one of the fellows with (a) ball and chain²² came along and Seng gave him a real close inspection. the fellow went up on the stairs to the top gallery. his cell was back at the farthest end. at the top of the stairs they kept a small box of sand about half full for a sort of trash receptacle. the box was about ten inches wide and probably two feet in length. the fellow set the iron ball on the floor of the gallery and picked up the box of sand. he raised it above his head and dropped it straight down at the head of Seng, twenty five feet, almost directly, below. as the leaden box went down Seng partly turned to speak to the guard and the box struck the floor with a crash. like the report of a gun and burst straight through the centre sending sand in all directions. if Seng hadn't turned just as he did it would have landed on his head. the fellow picked up the iron ball and went on down the gallery to his cell. he had sawed the rivet in two that held the iron on his ankle and as he opened his cell door he loosened the thing from his leg and threw the ball and chain over the gallery. it struck the table and went straight through to the floor leaving a six foot length of board standing straight up in the centre of the table. they told him that if he would consent to wear the ball and chain for a certain amount of

²¹Joseph Seng was sentenced to death for the murder of one Mr. Lloyd of Evanston. According to one report, Lloyd's wife threw herself over his body, but Seng dragged her away by the hair and emptied his pistol into Lloyd's still body. *Rawlins Daily Times*, August 19, 1967, p. 16.

²²The men with ball and chain restraints were recently recaptured run-aways from a roadgang. After the state began operating the prison, inmates were sent to work on state roads throughout the summer months. These road gangs were popular with most prisoners, and there were relatively few escape attempts. The prisoner's newspaper threatened grim consequences for anyone abusing the system. See "Wyoming and the Convicts," *Wyoming Pen*, Vol. I, No. 3, for a prisoner-written article supporting the road gang concept. A few years later, in 1916, the following advertisement was placed in *J-A-B-S*, the prisoner newsletter. "The inmates will give \$25.00 for the apprehension of any man who runs away from the road camps this summer. If you can't make good stay here." Wyoming State Archives, Cheyenne.

days they would take it off. he agreed to their terms and the thing was riveted on again . . .

on Sundays the way was open for anybody in the cell house to go out into the yard. i always worked on sundays and i could go out and in the cell house. the prisoners were all out of their cells and it looked queer to me that some of the tougher ones didn't make a break of some kind. they hardly said anything to me and i didnt know anything about their doings. the cells were left unlocked untill nine oclock at night and the prisoners could do as they pleased.

one night i and two other fellows were sitting in my cell when Dempsey came running in all out of breath and said, have any of you fellows got a saw of any kind? i told him i could get one if it was plumb necessairy. he said that the laundry door was unlocked and we could go in there and saw some of the bars off the outside windows and get out before the guard locked anybody up for the night. the whole outfit then started out and in about two minutes there was a collection of saws of all description. if Alston could have looked into that cell right then what he would have seen would have made him dizzy. but all the work was for nothing. the guard had unlocked the door to get some blankets out that were in the laundry he came back in a few minutes and locked the door . . . (pp. 96-100)

Nothing Alston did met with the author's approval. If he hesitated before making a decision, he was a vacillator, if he acted firmly, he was needlessly harsh. On one occasion, a slightly unbalanced prisoner dashed through the front gate while it was open for a departing wagon. A guard, knowing of the man's debility, refused to shoot him. Although the escapee was soon returned, Alston sternly reprimanded the guard before learning the reason for the man's reluctance to shoot.

Eventually affairs reached a stage where Alston seldom ventured from his office, and it seemed to the author that W. H. "Cap" Brine, the chief cell house guard, was actually running the penitentiary. Even with such a low profile, Alston's troubles continued.

it had always been the custom with the management to have one of the barbers, a certain one who was known as the head barber, come out into the turnkeys office and shave the guards. that was done twice each week. the barber who was then doing that work was a man named Clay who was doing twenty years for murder. he had been there quite a long time and about six months after Alston went there he applied for executive clemency. i was sitting in a cell one evening with a fellow who was working in the bake shop and whose name was Hickman. Clay came along and stopped and talked with us. he exhibited a letter which he had lately recieved from the governors office in Cheyenne. it was a reply to his petition for a pardon, and in which his request was flatly refused, he was greatly disappointed and not a little angry. well he said, that means about five or six years more of this for me, but i don't know, we will see about it. the next evening he went out to shave the guards in the office. he had done most of the work and was waiting for another guard to come in and be shaved. he asked the night turnkey if he could go upstairs to the hospital and visit a sick man there. the guard told him to go ahead. if the guard refused, the barber would have asked the warden and gotten permission from him anyway. and there was a chance that Alston would have called the guard down for refusing

such a small request. Clay went up the stairs passed the hospital and went on up to the highest room in the building. the room was used for guards quarters but it was unoccupied at that particular hour. Clay had concealed on his person a goodly amount of small closely woven rope, known as bell cord, there was a small window in the room with one pane of glass which swung open on a hinge. there were no bars on the window. he fastened the cord and climbed out the window and slid down the rope and then dropped, the remaining short distance, alighting in a deep snowdrift. he made good his escape from prison but was recaptured two years later and returned to the prison to finish out his sentence. (pp. 100-101)

Just as there was a good deal of conflict between the warden and the inmates, so too there was trouble within the prisoner's ranks. Often it came from a new arrival who was not aware of, or refused to accept, the existing hierarchy.

the men in the tailor shop helped to wait on the table during meal time, and Paseo also helped. his work was to go along the table after everybody had sat down and if there were not enough plates knives and so on to go around, he would go to the kitchen and get what was necessary. if there were too many he would take them away. he was good at his work, he was active as a cat and his snapping black eyes missed nothing . . .

we were eating breakfast when i noticed a fellow who sat almost directly across the table from me looking and scratching around his plate in search of something he said why havent i got any fork or knife. i wonder how they expect a man to eat without those things. he kept on in that manner. i glanced down the table and seen Paseo coming along with several plates on his arm. the fellow who was making such a fuss about his lack of silverware was a hobo who had just been in the prison a few days and during that time had acquired considerable of a reputation as being one of the type usually called fresh. when Paseo came along behind me the fellow said to him, say there you, go get me a knife and fork will you? the mexican said not a word but kept on along the table. he would go the length of the table and then bring out everything that was needed at one trip. he had passed by a few steps and the hobo called to him again, say there, are you going to get that knife and fork or not. Paseo came back and stood and looked at the hobo. he said, yes i will get you a knife and fork. the fellow said, well then go and get it. Paseo snatched one of the plates off his left arm and smacked the hobo on the face. as he reached across the table to hit the fellow with the plate he dropped one of the number that he held in his left arm. the hobo said, i guess i will have to get up to you. Paseo said come on and get up. the other said, why dont you be a man? Paseo went into the kitchen and brought out a knife and fork which he handed to the fellow, with the remark, now when you come away from the table i will be up there by the stairs and i will try and show you that i am a man. while i did not think much of the man or his ways, i was a little inclined to pity the fellow. i knew just about what would happen to the fellow when he left the table. he had only one show and that was to run at the first show of a hostile move on the part of the mexican. and i didn't think he was capable of using that much discretion. and he didnt. when we got to where Paseo was standing the mexican, true to his word, slapped the fellow in the face. there was a small box of plates on the table at the foot of the stairs and each prisoner was requested to take his knife and fork with him as he left the table and put them in the box before he went up the

stairs. a prisoner stood there and watched that all the fellow complied with the rule. Paseo was standing by the box when he struck the man in the face. the fellow still held his knife and fork in his hand. Paseo claimed that he stabbed at him with the fork. and the mexican went for his knife. the hobo turned and started to run towards the iron railing which enclosed the barber chairs ten feet away. he tried to go under the railing just as the mexican thrust his eight inch knife into his body two or three times. in one place the blade passed completely through his body. he rolled over on the floor and screamed with pain. Cap Brine hastened to Paseo and disarmed him of the murderous knife. i went forward to a place where i could see the performance. the wounded man lay moaning on the floor and Cap stood close by the mexican. the gray haired old guard was as calm and serene as a May morning, he held Paseo by the arm with his left arm and in his right he carelessly held the red stained knife. the mexican was quite unperturbed as he stood there with his hat thrown back from his brow looking coolly around upon the excited milling crowd of prisoners. Cap told him to go to his cell. the mexican did as he was told. i watched him as he walked away and he acted as though he had almost forgotten about knifeing the fellow. they laid the wounded man on a table to await the coming of the doctor. Cap handed the keys to one of the shop guards and told him to go up and lock Paseo in his cell. the guard afterwards told me that when he went to lock the mexican up that he was sitting on the gallery railing in front of his cell door placidly smoking a cigarette. the guard said that he walked up to him and said, well Paseo i guess i will have to lock you up. the mexican said alright and went in the cell. (pp. 102-103)

Paseo had long boasted he would not go to the dungeon. At first, he refused to budge when "Cap" Brine told him he was scheduled for solitary. The doctor tried to drug him into submission, but to no avail. Finally, "Cap" convinced him to go, or be shot where he sat.

In the midst of the excitement over the stabbing, the author missed a chance to escape. Shortly before, he had been asked by Dempsey to make a frame for a hacksaw blade. Afraid of being caught with the frame in the general inspection he was sure would follow the stabbing, he slipped it to another prisoner who passed it on to Dempsey. But, there was no search, and

"that night about eight oclock Dempsey and Hickman escaped by sawing through a door and a window. there was an old abandoned cellar under the guards kitchen which had one window the same as are in a basement. that window was on the outside clear of the wall. a door led to the cellar from the prisoners kitchen but was locked and hadnt been used for years. the doors leading into the kitchen from the cell house were open and all that was required was to go in and saw through the bars of the cellar door and once in the cellar they could escape even if they had been missed from their places in the cell house. and they carried the hacksaw with them. they made good their escape. Dempsey left the country and was never returned to the prison. the other fellow, hickman was captured about three or four years later and brought back . . . (p. 104)

Because of such poor timing and bad luck, the author managed to keep his record unblemished. He was soon promoted to a

better job in the engine room. "Cap" Brine became his friend, stopping by regularly for conversation.

one day he came in there and stood and talked for a few minutes, then asked me in an off hand way, if i had seen anything of Black. the man he refered to was a prisoner. i asked him if Black had left for the summer range or what was the matter. Cap said that he didn't know where he was, that he had been reported missing and that he had just started out to see if he could locate the fellow. a short time before Alston had gotten one of the old time guards, of Grahams, to come there and work. there was a report current at that time, that Alston finding himself unable to cope with the situation, had sent for the certain guard to come and tighten up the place for him. whether that was true or not i dont know, but at any rate the fellow was there. he had just gotten out of jail himself, and that i do know for sure. When Black came up missing, the new old guard took a leading part in the search which resulted in finding the miscreant under the floor of the broom shop. a new form of punishment was brought into play in that case.

Black was not put in the hole. they rivetted a pair of shackles on his ankles and sent him to work in the shop. Black was about an hour in walking to the shop. and when he did get there he didnt work more than another hour untill he got his hobbled feet entangled some way and fell down. in his fall he struck his head on something and claimed that he was about killed. they assisted him to his cell and bandaged his head. he didnt go to supper having been in bed since the accident. when the men came up from supper a stool pidgeon went past the cell of Black and stopped to talk with him. when the new guard went along the gallery making the count after supper the stool pidgeon stopped him and asked him if he had counted Black. the guard said yes that Black was there and wanted to know what the fellow was talking about, and called him down for stopping him during the count, and causing him to loose track of the correct number on that gallery. well said the fellow, you better go back and look at Black again. the guard went back and peered into Blacks cell, apparently the fellow was lying in bed with his blankets thrown over his body, the manacled feet protruding from under the covering. the guard opened the cell door and went inside. the man on the bed proved to be entirely devoid of flesh and blood. that was one instance where clothes made the man. a suit of clothes similar to those worn by Black had been stuffed to the right proportions and the shackles had been sawed off and put on the legs of the dummy figure. the head was nothing more than a full loaf of bread with the blood stained bandage tied around it. the guard gave the alarm and another search started. they took Lindsey the human ferret²³ and sent him under the shop floor to rout out the quarry. but without results. they searched all that night and didnt find Black. they (got) all the help they could get from the county and city authorities in Rawlins in the search, but they could not find the man. i heard Alston tell the guards that if he ever seen Black again that it would be when he was brought in the front door of the prison with handcuffs

²³The "human ferret" was a diminutive prisoner who was used on several occasions by prison authorities. When a prisoner did not appear for evening roll call, and was suspected to be hiding somewhere within the prison, Lindsey was sent under buildings and through heating tunnels in search of the miscreant.

on. he said that he had no doubt gotten over the wall in some way before he was ever missed. the guards on the wall said that such a thing would have been almost impossible. they abandoned the search but kept an extra guard on at night.

the second day Lindsey the ferret came up to the cell house and told the guards that Black was in the boiler room. he said that Black had been hidden in the combustion chamber of one of the boilers and when a fire was started with the intention of steaming up that boiler, that Black came out and Lindsey seen him. they went down and looked and sure enough Black was there. he was watched closely from that time on and didn't have much chance to substitute any dummies in the place of himself . . . (pp. 105-106)

There were other escape attempts—some successes, some failures—and other continuing disruptions. Although he was never caught, the author continued his place in the midst of prisoner scheming. After one unsuccessful attempt, statewide attention was focused on the penitentiary. The broom factory was burned to the ground.²⁴

the stockade was also burned down for several hundred feet back of the shop. when the place was burning the prisoners yelled and howled like a pack of hyenas. they enjoyed that better than they would a fourth of july picnic. they had kept trying till they succeeded in burning the place down.

after (the fire) they were locked in their cells for about a week (and) they howled because they couldnt get out. the next day after the fire Alston took several of the prisoners out to build up the wall where it had burned down. i was one of the bunch. as soon as the wall was repaired all of the prisoners were let out and the work of clearing away the debris from the fire began. that didnt take very long and preparations were made at once to rebuild the factory . . .

there was (no) trouble of any kind among the prisoners working in the yard. all seemed to be ready to work and the construction work went on smoothly. the work was all done volentairly. they had hauled a large amount of rock in the yard to use in the construction of the new factory which was to be made of concrete. the rock was dumped along quite close to the stockade. i suppose that they had put it there so that it would be out of the way of the other work. the prisoners were requested to break up the rock with hammers. they would sit there in the sun and crack rocks all day long. most of them sat where they could lean back against the wall. there was no discipline whatever and if a prisoner wanted to crack rocks well and good and if he was more inclined to carpenter work he could do that. the prisoners classed themselves. and they all worked. one could see them congregated in small bunches talking and laughing while doing their share of the light work. some of those little gatherings were made up entirely of box car tourists, while others were composed of horse thieves, or sheep herders, with an occasional expoliceman. (pp. 107-108)

While the factory was being rebuilt, two events occurred which further fastened attention on Rawlins and the penitentiary. Before

²⁴The broom factory burned on the night of July 18, 1912. *Biennial Report, 1911-1912*, p. 20.

winter had conquered fall in 1912, Alston's future was settled. He had lost control of his charges. First, the prisoners lynched Charles Wigfall, a black being held on a rape charge, and less than a month later over twenty prisoners took their leave in a mass escape.

Because of the significance of these events, an account of them follows without expurgation.

the work of construction progressed rapidly and in two months after the shop burned the concrete walls of the new factory were almost up. things were going along smoothly and it seemed for a time as though the routine of prison life was going to get monotonous. but not so, along in the latter days of september the spell was broken. i had been away from the blacksmith shop for an hour or two and when i went back i could see by the signs that something had happened. several men were grouped in the back end of the shop and were talking in an excited manner. Brink asked me to guess what had happened. but i could not think of anything and he told me what the excitement was about. a few months (before) there had been an old negro released from the prison after serving a fourteen year term for a revolting crime which is peculiar to the black race.²⁵ he had previously served one or more terms for the same crime. he was always a good old darkie when in the prison and was well liked by the prisoners. he had been down town since his release. Brink said that on the night before, the negro whose name was Wigfall, had repeated the same offense for which he had just served a fourteen year sentence. he had chosen for a victim an old lady who lived near the prison. the peculiar circumstances surrounding the crime proved the negro to be possessed of a heart black as inky midnight.²⁶ he had escaped across country on foot. according to the latest reports they were hot on his trail and his capture was assured. that evening when i and Brink went in through the guard house a guard told me at the lookout window before i went in that Wigfall had been taken at Fort Steel.²⁷ he said that they would in all probability lynch him when he was brought to Rawlins. there was much talk that night among the prisoners about the negro . . .

the next morning after Wigfall had been captured, i had just got out of bed when Rich came to my door and said, who do you think they brought in last night. i said i didnt know and asked him who had been brought in. i never dreamed of Wigfall being brought up

²⁵Westerners held the same ignorant prejudices about black inferiority and degeneracy as their eastern neighbors. In Wyoming, there was outspoken and unreasoned resistance to the arrival of black miners in Hanna in 1890. Black troops called to quell the Johnson County War in 1892 found themselves the main actors in a violent episode which left one of their number dead. Larson, *Wyoming*, pp. 305-306; and Frank N. Schubert, "The Suggs Affray: The Black Cavalry in the Johnson County War," *The Western Historical Quarterly*, Vol. IV, No. 1, pp. 56-68.

²⁶Wigfall was accused of assaulting and raping an aged resident of Rawlins, Mrs. Esther Higgins, on September 29, 1912. The story of his arrest and subsequent death at the hands of the inmates received wide coverage in the state's newspapers. See for example, the *Cheyenne State Leader*, October 3, 1912, p. 1, and the *Wyoming State Tribune*, (Cheyenne) October 2, 1912, p. 1.

²⁷Fort Steele, east of Rawlins was an abandoned army post.

there. Rich said that the negro was down in the recieving cell. he asked me what i thought should be done with him. he said that he would go down and talk to the fiend and find out what he had to say. Rich came back directly and was all excited. he said that Wigfall didnt seem at all alarmed about the seriousness of the crime with which he was guilty. he said to Rich, well i aint worrin any because i'll be down at di wadens house anyway after ise gets sentenced. and if ise gets one yeah, five yeahs or foteen yeahs why ise can do dat easy. he had been working down town at Alstons residence during the last few months of his time and he figured, rightly, that he would be there again, and he had it figured out right. one of his calibre didnt have to drink skimmed milk there, they got the pure cream. that is why that Wigfall was killed by the prisoners. he would have been permitted to go down the street right past the house where he had comitted the crime. he might have been several years, just as he said, in getting on the good side of Alston but he would have made it just the same.

the prisoners had breakfast at seven oclock and a half hour later they were let out in the yard to work. when the doors to the yard were opened the men who were at work on the factory building all went along to their work. after they had all gotten away from the vicinity of the cell house, certain men could be seen going here and there in a hurried manner. the blacksmith shop seemed to be the center of attraction right then. there were several men in the shop, among whom were Paseo, Burke, and Richardson. the others were in the bake shop and prisoners kitchen, it was said, getting a bunch together with the intentions of hanging Wigfall. the head cell house guard come in the shop and wanted to know of the tin smith if he had a can of some description that he could get to take in some drinking water to Wigfall. he was handed a cut down gallon tomato can that had been used for a cuspidor. he said that the negro complained about the quality of his food at breakfast. it was a little frosty that morning and we were all congregated around the stove. the guard, who was called Jack, was standing with his back to the stove, and with a gloomy expression on his face. Brink asked the guard what he thought they would do about it if the negro should be lynched. the guard said, i don't think they would do anything. he then took the tin can and went out. nearly all the others also went out. in a few minutes Burke came back and i asked him if they were going to hang the negro. he said yes that they would soon be ready. i asked him what they were waiting for. he said he didnt know but that he had told them to come on and do the thing right away. i told him that the only thing that i could see that they could be waiting for was, for Cap to hear about the thing and come out and take them all to the dungeon, so they could blame me for telling it. well he said, what can be done to hurry the thing up. i told him to go to each man who had been blowing off steam about hanging the fellow, and ask him if he wanted to help. if he said yes, then tell him to go at once to the prisoners kitchen and wait there. he said alright and went out on the run. i told Brink if he was going to hang the Black Man to go and do it. i asked what could be had in the way of a rope. he conducted me to a locker in the back end of the shop and opened the door. on a shelf within was a coil of rope. it was ordinary grass rope of about half inch, or five eights, diameter. there was somewhere around forty feet of rope. i took the coil of rope and coiled it into a tall can that had been used to carry water in. the contents of the can were concealed by a quantity of old rags crambd into the top. that was taken to the kitchen.

all that was done in about twenty minutes after the men had been

let out into the yard. there had been much talk that morning concerning the hanging of Wigfall and most of the fellows around the kitchen and cell house thought that the warden would get wind of the goings on and put a stop to the thing. but it happened so quick when it did get started that it took their breath. i went to the kitchen to watch the performance. i wasnt in the habit of going in that particular kitchen as the worst enemies i had in the place were working there. the cook however was a real good friend of mine. he asked me if i cared for some coffee. i took a cupfull and went to a convenient place in the back of the room and sat down. the coffee was too hot to drink and at the first trial i gave it up, and set the cup down.

i hadnt been in the place over one minute untill things began to happen. a small bunch of men came in the outside door as though they were about half hour late for dinner and hungry as wolves. and they were late and hungry as wolves, but not for dinner. the personal of that little delegation was made up of such gentlemen as Burke, Paseo, Howard, Brink and Elliot. they made as though to continue on their way through the kitchen into the cell house, and Wigfall. Brink interposed between them and the door. the rope was dumped from the can and thrown out on the floor where the kinks were run out. Brink said, now wait a minute fellows, two of you go into the cell house and capture Jack and take the keys from him and lock him into a cell, and dont hurt him. two men turned and ran into the cell house to overpower the guard and the whole outfit followed right on their heels. Brink and one other ran down the south side of the cell house looking for Jack. there were few men in sight as it was early in the morning and they hadnt even started the usual work such as sweeping the floor and so on. there was a man named Jenkins in the condemned cell at that time and the guard who was acting as death watch was standing in plain view in front of the death cell. he started to the lookout window to sound the alarm but was confronted by one of the invaders armed with a knife. he was ordered to the back of the cell house, and he obeyed. the guard they were looking for was nowhere in sight. Brink ran clear around and through the alley to the north side of the place, as he emerged from the alley he ran out so he could look up on the galleries at the same time saying, i wonder where in the sam hill Jack can be at. the rest of the lynchers had went down the north end and were congregated in front of the negros cell. and Jack was walking the galleries, the first one above the floor, right above Wigfalls cell. he held the keys in his hand the same as usual. Brink leaped upon the table and from there to the gallery. he grappled with the guard who struggled to free himself. He was anything but a strong man physically and was helpless in the grasp of the husky blacksmith. Burke leaped from the table and grasped the bunch of keys which he jerked from the guards hand. the keys were in turn snatched from the hand of Burke and the door of Wigfall's cell was unlocked in a twinkling.

the ape-like form of the negro could be seen in the dark interior of the cell as he stood cowering in the farthest corner. he was instantly grasped and yanked out through the door where the rope was thrown in a double half hitch about his neck. from the time when he was pulled from the cell he never had an opportunity to stand still, the outfit went at double quick time towards the stairs to the galleries. the negro was clothed only in a night shirt. Rich didn't want to be seen with the outfit and after they got to the stairs he went back in the direction of the tailor shop. they went up the stairs to the top gallery and stopped at the place where previously a man committed suicide by jumping off the gallery. Wigfall was ordered to jump off

the gallery, but didnt seem anxious to obey. he was menaced by a knife in the hand of Paseo. he asked that he be allowed time in which to pray. he was told that if he could make it short enough that he would have time to offer a prayer while making the decent. he was forced over the railing and he went down hand over hand like a sailor, or monkey, he dropped and caught the railing of the gallery below. he was instantly dislodged from there by one of the party who had went downstairs to forestall just such a move on the part of the negro. he fell to the end of the rope. he was then drawn up by those at the top and dropped the entire distance again. . .

the hanging had taken place on the second day of october and on the twelfth day the place was again the scene of much excitement. there were supposed to be four guards on the wall but one was absent. that left one to guard the entire back side of the wall. he was some kind of a foriegner and didnt know much about what he was supposed to do. the guard over the gate told (him) to stay back at his post, but he didnt pay any attention to him and continued to be there.

Brink, Elliot and myself were working on a clogged sewer close to the cell house door when Cap was in the gate guards tower. Paseo, Rich, Backstrom and Burke were pitching horse shoes close by the blacksmith shop. we suddenly heard gun shots from the direction of the back wall. then the excitement started. something had happened in back of the new building. the contractor who was overseeing the work of construction displayed some presence of mind by shouting to the prisoners to climb up with him to the roof where a good view of the performance could be had. they followed him up the ladder like sheep. the gun guard in the cell house unlocked the door to his gallery and went down into the front office and out the front door of the prison. he ran around to the back of the wall and when he seen several prisoners running a block away, he fired a shot in the ground ahead of them and was successfull in halting and capturing four of them.

while the guard was at the gate talking to the gate guard some of the prisoners had tore a great hole in the stockade and twenty of them got out. everybody was ordered into the cell house and locked up. i and Brink were allowed to stay in the yard. the whole force of guards and the authorities from downtown turned out to round up the scattered convicts. they brought them back in small bunches. some of them managed to escape capture for days or weeks but only one out of the twenty got away for good. that is he has never been located so far.

that evening when i went in, Rich asked me what i thought of Alston. whether i figured that he would keep his promises or not. i told him that all anybody could judge by was the way Alston had performed in the past, which didnt look good. Rich said, well i will think it over. the next day was Sunday and the place was quiet as a church. there was an armed guard on the gallery at the end of the cell house but there was only one guard on the floor. there was only one on the wall and he was over the gate. the prisoners were all out of their cell running around the cell house in the cell house work. in the mornings it was necessary to open the outside doors in carrying out the ordinary mornings work. Rich, Burke, Elliot, Paseo, Backstrom and Gilmore had planned to run out when the door was opened and go around to the west front end of the wall and tear a hole through the planking and escape. they intended going straight down town and raiding a hardware store to secure guns. but they couldnt agree on that plan. Burke wanted to wait untill afternoon and then take the keys away from the guard and go out through the kitchen door locking everybody in the place so that the alarm wouldn't be

given untill they had gotten a good start. but they didnt all want to do that. Rich said that if they didnt go right away that he was going to kill Brink and then get killed himself. he said that he was never going to be locked in a cell again while he was alive. they agreed to go.

Jack went into the kitchen about the middle of the afternoon and they were all in there waiting for him. They took the keys from his and Elliot went to lock the door so that nobody in the kitchen could get back into the cell house. but he was so excited that he couldn't lock the door and they left it opened. Rich wanted to take the guard with them so that he could (not) turn in an alarm. but Paseo wouldnt agree to that. they went out and two others from the kitchen also went making eight altogether. they were through the wall and half a block down the street before any of the officers got out the front door. Cap and one or two guards were in the wardens office at the time, they secured rifles and started in pursuit of the fleeing convicts. Frazier, the fellow who had been with Paseo on the key making proposition was one of the eight escapees. the guard who was with Cap seen him turn off from the other fellows and run up a side street. The guard pursued Frazier and ran him right back to the front door of the prison, which was opened by the turnkey as they came near and Frazier was coralled like a cow. in a few minutes we could hear the bang of shots down town. the sounds of firing continued for some time. an automobile drew up at the front door and i could see that the car was full of armed men, and that they had a prisoner. it was Elliot. he was quite unable to walk and seemed to be badly injured but he hadnt received a scratch. he was suffering from fright. Gilmore had secreted himself in a barn and was discovered and captured. a fellow named Stewart who had went with the others was also captured in town that night and brought back. Paseo was shot and killed by Cap. Rich managed to secure a rifle from a citizen and then shot and killed the first man he could see who had a gun. the victim had just returned from the outskirts of town where he had been engaged in trap shooting and had his shot gun in his hand. Rich, Burke and Backstrom escaped from town across the open range. they were not pursued. two weeks afterwards Rich and Backstrom were suprised in a sheep camp about sixty-five miles southwest of Rawlins, and shot to death. Burke had separated from them a short time before that and escaped. he has up till now evaded capture . . .²⁸

after the breaks of the fall, there had been no trouble. Alston very seldom come around the inside of the prison . . . during the last three years of his administration, Alston was warden in name only. Cap

²⁸This account of the escape is verified, in substance, by newspaper accounts. Twenty seven men escaped, and one citizen was killed. Although the prison was now totally run by the state, the *Biennial Reports* of the State Board of Charities and Reform still leave far too much unsaid. Warden Alston's narrative report makes no mention of the mass escape or the Wigfall hanging. The only indication of the escape is a line in the prisoner tally which reads "escaped from prison—26."

State politicians had a field day with the escape. Republican opponents of Governor Joseph Carey charged Democratic mismanagement was to blame. The governor responded with the unlikely explanation that the mutiny was inspired by his opposition in an attempt to damage his credibility. Neither assertion seems worthy of comment. Larson, *Wyoming*, pp. 332-333.

ran the place and got along first class with the prisoners and everybody. he would do anything in his power to help a prisoner. he tried at all times to aid me in seeing the error of my ways, but without much success.²⁹

I was in the same position as any other who travels that road, i would either learn to mend my ways or spend all my life in the penitentiary but seeing the light, was in my case, a little like enforcing prohibition, a slow process. (pp. 109-114)

Seeing the light was indeed a slow process for the anonymous author of these reminiscences. He had spent approximately ten of his first thirty years in the Rawlins penitentiary. His last sojourn seemed to have the desired effect, however. Once free, and determined never to return, he chose to write about his experiences. The result is a unique and valuable document.

Were it viewed only as the adventures of a frontier criminal, this would be an interesting narrative. It is much more than that. Into the warp and weft of this account of the adventures of an amoral young man is woven the far more interesting tale of the impact which incarceration has upon a man's mind and body. Here too, is a strong antithesis for the sterile reports filed annually by the State Board of Charities and Reform. Taboo subjects such as alcoholism and drugs, weapons, arson, and suicide and self-mutilation are discussed freely, almost casually.

No one intended that the Rawlins penitentiary should be a resort hotel, but it is doubtful that even the most revenge-minded citizen would deliberately subject an inmate to all which awaited him after the gate closed behind him. Until it was abolished, the broom factory was adequate punishment by itself. Under the lease agreement with the state, the operators of the factory agreed to provide the essential needs of the prisoners in return for the fruits of their dismal hours in the factory. They had no concern for the rehabilitation, and little more for the health, of their charges. The account suggests that life under the lease system was extremely bleak; the prisoners were regarded as little more than beasts of burden. After being processed in, the new arrival was usually assigned to a tying machine. A tedious, unpleasant task, it awaited the inmate every morning except Sundays and holidays. Meals provided by the leasee were barely life sustaining. The inmate/author's stories of stale, hard bread; thick, almost undrinkable coffee; hoarded bread crusts; dangerous risks for a piece of purloined pie; and excessive concern for the better meals given the guards and a privileged few prisoners are ample testimony to the quality of food most men endured.

One point regularly stressed in the *Biennial Reports* of the State

²⁹The "Wyoming Pen," published by prisoner editors, contains several references to "Cap" Brine, always in a familiar and laudatory vein, much as though he were one of the "boys."

Board of Charities and Reform was the good health of the prisoners, and the relative lack of disease at the prison. The author tells a different story. He writes of doctors who cared little about the ills of their patients. Work was the prescribed cure for most ills; for prisoners obviously too sick to work, little more was done than return them to their cells. Certainly, the doctors had to contend with malingerers, but at times medical care seems to have become part of the prisoners' punishment. The recalcitrant Mexican who entered the hospital, never to reappear, is a case in point. The story may not be true, but even if it is a figment of a paranoid imagination, it exhibits the fear held for the doctor and his hospital.

For those who refused to accept the dreary prison routine, the dungeon was always waiting. The dungeon was not an abstract concept visualized from the comfort of an easy chair. The scorching sun overhead the long silent hours, and the steady diet of bread and water of the dungeon were a very real part of life in the Wyoming State Penitentiary, as were the factory, the food and the hospital.

To say the least, it was depressing to be incarcerated at Rawlins. The oppressing atmosphere constantly wore away at the prisoners. Probably no aspect of the author's work is more valuable than his account of deviant behavior patterns among the inmates. Men reacted differently to life behind bars.

✓ Suicide was one alternative, and we have accounts of men who took that route. One man dived onto a hardwood table from the upper deck of the cell block. Another attempted to shoot his way out of the prison, and when he failed, turned the gun on himself. Other men either attempted or considered taking their lives.

For those unwilling to end their lives, other measures beckoned. Self-mutilation is clearly evidenced. How can we understand the troubled mind of the prisoner who severed a portion of his hand in an effort to escape the broom factory? Other men deliberately submitted themselves over and over to the dungeon, or constantly resisted (the white-haired Edmundson is the best example) the regulations of the prison, at the expense of their health and welfare.

Although alcohol and drugs were prohibited within the prison, some prisoners found and used them. The author recounts a story of drunkenness from stolen wood alcohol, and in at least one case, a large cache of drugs acquired from the hospital. It is reasonable to assume that these are only single manifestations of what must have been a greater problem for prison officials.

Escape was the alternative most often on the minds of those who felt they could endure no more. ✓ The narrative is replete with numerous accounts of prisoner escapes and attempted escapes. The obsession with escape manifests itself in many ways. Some men were loners who kept their own counsel, while others seemed to need the connivance and support of large numbers of their colleagues. ✓ Perhaps as important as the escape itself was the

planning conspiracy. It gave men a rallying point and a goal. For the main conspirator, if his idea seemed sound, it was an opportunity to stand as a leader with the respect and fealty of his peers.

Other forms of conspiracy suggest further proof of the prisoners' need for a goal, or a means of proving their worth. Scattered throughout the account are surprisingly casual references to weapons. The secret possession of any kind of weapon was one means of re-establishing at least a modicum of the self-respect left outside the walls. A knife made one just a bit more of a man. Revealing also is the author's account of his attempt to sneak several dimes past the guards when he was brought into the prison. The money was not going to be of a great deal of use to him inside the walls, but as he freely admits, the real purpose behind his act was simply to see if he could get away with it.

Two prisoner conspiracies stand out because of the large number of men involved. One is the mass escape in 1912 in which twenty-eight men escaped, and the other is the hanging of Charles Wigfall. Despite their dissimilar purposes, these incidents do have similarities. They represent the ability of the prisoners to communicate among themselves quickly and easily, and they show at least an occasional unity of action.

The Wigfall lynching does not readily lend itself to explanation. The ease with which it was accomplished, as well as the behavior of the prison officials once it was discovered, suggests their passive approval. Official approval was not the cause, however. The author suggests the real causes were moral outrage and the fear that Wigfall would soon be returned to his former position as special servant to the warden. Yet, the prison held other murderers and rapists, and many men vied for softer jobs. When all other explanations have been examined and found to have occurred at other times without provoking similar outrage, one reason remains. Charles Wigfall was black. Other authors have offered testimony to racism on the frontier. Here is proof that even among frontier society's rejects these attitudes prevailed.

The memoirs of this anonymous inmate/author comprise an intriguing manuscript. Few questions are fully answered. It is not a complete work which carefully examines prison life and its effects. It is more like a peep show. There are seductive hints, but few full revelations. When an encompassing history of the Wyoming State Penitentiary is written, this manuscript will be a useful research source.

Army Bread and Army Mission on the Frontier,

WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO FORT LARAMIE,
WYOMING, 1865 - 1890

By

JEROME A. GREENE

This article was prepared in conjunction with a study for Fort Laramie National Historic Site and the National Park Service.

On March 19, 1887, Assistant Surgeon Arthur W. Taylor filed a special report with Headquarters, Department of the Platte, concerning the bread ration at Fort Laramie, Wyoming. "Soon after my arrival at this post," he wrote,

the bread issued and used by the troops attracted my attention. After careful examinations . . . of the bread, the Bakery and the flour used I find that the bread issued to the troops is unwholesome and not fit for food. It is bitter and after a short time (a few hours after baking) becomes musty. This bread causes Gastric and Intestinal dyspepsia. . . . The cause of the bad quality of the bread is the flour issued and used in baking. Some of this flour is musty, and contains the micro organism due to must. . . . I have the honor to recommend that for sanitary reasons, the issue and use of this flour in making bread for issue to the troops be discontinued.¹

While the immediate problem was remedied in time, Taylor's remarks conceded the status of bread as a prime component of the soldier's ration and its consequent value to the maintenance of a healthy, well-nourished army. Scarcely less implicit was the desire to maintain an operation conducive to the production of good bread. Perhaps of peripheral interest administratively, the post bakery at Fort Laramie, as well as those at other western stations, assumed major importance to the men garrisoned there and to medical personnel charged with securing their health. Probably no other building, save the hospital and company kitchens, came under more scrutiny by responsible officers than the bakehouse. Good bread afforded blanket insurance for the troops; inadequate

¹Records of the Office of the Adjutant General, "Medical History of Posts, Fort Laramie," March, 1887, transcribed copy in the Research Files, Fort Laramie National Historic Site, Wyoming (hereafter cited as "Medical History").

supplies, preparation, and facilities could compromise, or even jeopardize, their well being.

Bread has constituted a staple of man's diet for centuries. Modern armies since the time of Louis XIV have made bread a major part of their sustenance, and in eighteenth-century France portable ovens were carried on campaign to facilitate its ample provision. By the mid-nineteenth century scarcely a nation, including the United States, failed to provide bread daily for its soldiers.² The importance of proper facilities and training, essential for producing good bread, was well perceived in the upper echelons of the United States Army. As Major General Winfield Scott explained,

Bread and soup are the great items of a soldier's diet in every situation: to make them well is an essential part of his instruction. Those great scourges of camp, scurvy and diarrhoea, more frequently result from want of skill in cooking than from any other cause whatever. Officers in command, and, more immediately, regimental officers, will, therefore, give strict attention to this vital branch of interior economy.³

For garrisoned troops, the post bakery constituted one means for best implementing such dictums.

Two army bureaus, the Quartermaster's Department and the Subsistence Department, jointly administered the construction and supplying of army bakeries. Principally concerned with transportation, supply, and the care of military cemeteries, the Quartermaster's Department procured materials for construction and repair of all buildings at army installations, including bakehouses.⁴ In the bakery, the Quartermaster furnished all brooms, utensils, and furniture authorized, excepting ovens, and paid fuel expenses whenever bakery requirements exceeded savings from the fuel allowances to the troops otherwise used.⁵ So far as the western posts were concerned, vast distances, primitive land routes, and freezing rivers compounded the task of the Quartermaster's Department. Only the completion of the transcontinental railroads and subsidiary lines in the 1860s and 1870s obviated these difficulties.⁶

²Edward S. Farrow, *Farow's Military Encyclopedia* (3 vols.; New York: Published by the author, 1885), I, 127.

³Quoted in N. Hershler, *The Soldier's Handbook; for the Use of Enlisted Men of the Army* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1884), p. 52.

⁴"Report of the Quartermaster-General," October 10, 1876, in *Report of the Secretary of War, 1876* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1876), p. 113.

⁵U. S. House of Representatives, *Revised Army Regulations*, Report No. 85, 42 Cong., 3d Sess., March 1, 1873, p. 43 (hereafter cited as *A.R.*, 1873); *Regulations for the Army of the United States, 1895* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1899), p. 43 (hereafter cited as *A.R.*, 1895).

⁶Russell F. Weigley, *History of the United States Army* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1967), p. 269.

More indirectly involved with the function of the post bakery was the Subsistence Department. While construction and equipage fell to the Quartermaster, the Commissary General's Office handled subsistence matters. The Subsistence Department provided the soldier's ration, or expenses for it, and central to the ration was flour for breadmaking. At posts inaccessible to ready flour supplies, this article arrived over great distances at considerable cost and despair. As an inspector at the Sub Depot of New San Diego, California, remarked in 1854, "Flour frequently spoils before it reaches here from the Atlantic States. . . . 691 barrels [of] flour . . . have been consumed since the 1st January, 1852. Hereafter, it is presumed, flour will be supplied from California and Oregon, where there is abundance of the best manufactured."⁷

Besides the basic commodity of flour, the Subsistence Department contributed such other necessities as salt and lard. Storage of these properties demanded constant attention, for most were perishable and required the utmost vigilance for their preservation.⁸ At all posts, commissary storehouses sheltered the foodstuffs from which the bakeries drew their needs. Non-food items managed by the Subsistence Department included the bake ovens, built and funded through the Commissary's office, and such lighting apparatus as candles, lamps, and oil for interior building use.⁹

Ever cognizant of the importance of bread to the soldier's diet, and of problems encountered in its preparation, Brigadier General Amos B. Eaton pressed for improvements in army bakeries throughout his tenure as Commissary General. In 1869 he urged the abolition of bakeries run by nonmilitary personnel. "The Subsistence Department," he contended, "should own and conduct all Army bakeries, and should bake the soldiers' flour exclusively, in the interests of the soldier and of his table-fare."¹⁰ One of Eaton's successors, Brigadier General Robert Macfeely, believing that army baking suffered as much from faulty bakers as from faulty flour, recommended in 1876 "that bakers . . . be specially enlisted, paid extra-duty pay, say \$4 per month, and assigned to posts as commissary-sergeants. I recommend that should schools for cooks be established at recruiting-depots, bakers should also be instructed at the same schools."¹¹

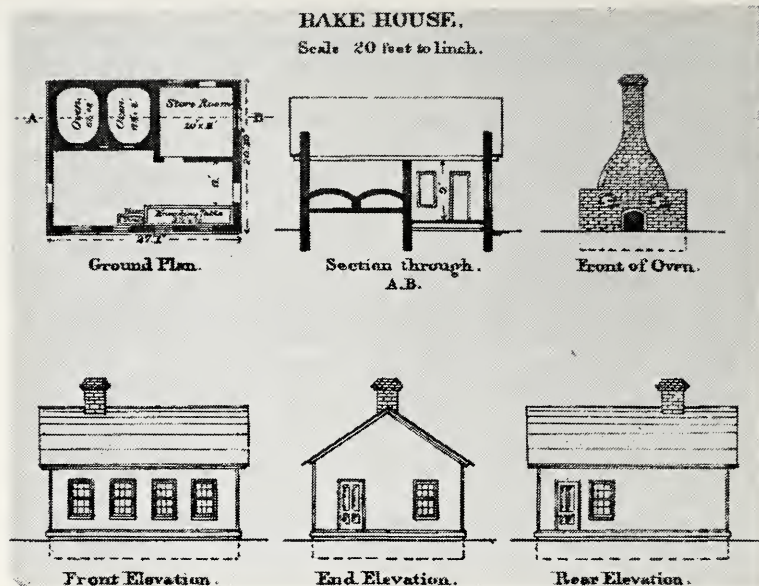
⁷Robert W. Frazer (ed.), *Mansfield on the Condition of Western Forts, 1853-1854* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1963), p. 140.

⁸*Revised Regulations for the Army of the United States, 1861* (Philadelphia: J. G. L. Brown, Printer, n.d.), p. 248 (hereafter cited as *A.R.*, 1861).

⁹*Ibid.*; *A.R.*, 1873, p. 43.

¹⁰"Report of the Commissary-General of Subsistence," October 9, 1875, in *Report of the Secretary of War, 1875* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1875), p. 312.

¹¹Quoted in "Report of the Commissary-General of Subsistence," October 9, 1879, in *Report of the Secretary of War, 1879* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1879), p. 389.



—National Park Service

General plan for army bakeries, 1872, from *Drawings of Military Buildings*, (Washington: Office of the Quartermaster-General, 1872).

None of Macfeely's suggestions won immediate acceptance and he found solace only in the 1879 publication of the *Manual for Army Cooks*, its contents drawn from the report of a board appointed jointly by the Surgeon General and himself. The manual outlined useful information on baking and the army distributed a copy to every company unit in 1880.¹² Moreover, in 1882 Major George Bell's *Notes on Breadmaking, Permanent and Field Ovens, and Bake Houses* appeared, giving more thorough guidelines on bread preparation and baking methods. Yet throughout the 1880s Macfeely persisted in his call for sensible baking and cooking reforms, and particularly for the enlistment of suitably trained personnel. As it existed, he reported, "the men so detailed are inexperienced, and from the temporary nature of the employment they take but little interest in it, and frequently look upon the work with disgust."¹³ No matter how good the quality or quantity of

¹²"Report of the Commissary-General of Subsistence," October 11, 1880, in *Report of the Secretary of War, 1880* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1880), p. 505.

¹³"Report of the Commissary-General of Subsistence," October 15, 1884,

the raw issue, argued Macfeely, "the best flour in the hands of a bad baker will produce bad bread."¹⁴ But the Macfeely proposals went unheeded. Even the support of the Quartermaster General, who urged similar measures himself in the 1890s, failed to implement change. No army cooking and baking schools were established until 1905.¹⁵

Given the unenthusiastic official posture towards improving the proficiency of bakers, and thus the quality of bread, army garrisons during the frontier period contended with time-worn procedure. Post bakehouses also changed little. Slight variations might have existed from one station to another, but most consisted of simple rectangular or T-shaped structures. No standard specifications appeared until 1872, and while the proposed revision of Army Regulations released the following year called for strict adherence to these plans, departures from the requisite probably occurred.¹⁶

By far the most essential units of bakery equipment, the ovens enabled the troops to have bread daily at an economical expenditure of fuel and flour.¹⁷ Permanent ovens, unlike the portable field varieties, were built of brick and usually on completion formed one whole end of the bakehouse. Those at Fort Laramie in 1876 were double ovens, each measuring about six feet, five inches by eight feet, with a combined capacity of 500 rations per baking.¹⁸ Bread baked in the ovens stood a day before distribution, for that served sooner often posed difficulties in digestion. Post bakers and their assistants kept busy from dawn to dusk preparing yeast and dough, overseeing the baking, and policing the bakehouse. Occasionally dampened hard bread was redried after a regular baking of soft bread. By inserting boxes of the field ration in the ovens and exposing them to 140° (Fahrenheit) heat for

in *Report of the Secretary of War, 1884* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1884), p. 704.

¹⁴"Report of the Commissary-General of Subsistence," October 8, 1883, in *Report of the Secretary of War, 1883* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1883), p. 590. See also Robert M. Utley, *Frontier Regulars: The United States Army and the Indian, 1886-1890* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1973), pp. 85-86.

¹⁵Erna Risch, *Quartermaster Support of the Army: A History of the Corps, 1775-1939* (Washington: Office of the Quartermaster General, 1962), p. 507. As early as 1861 one reporter wrote: "It is somewhat singular that, although the importance of good food to health is everywhere acknowledged, and the evils consequent upon ill cooking are everywhere deplored, no means are yet adopted to remedy the latter by providing a corps of scientific cooks for our armies." John Ordonaux, *Hints on the Preservation of Health in Armies for the Use of Volunteer Officers and Soldiers* (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1861), pp. 72-73.

¹⁶*A.R.*, 1873, p. 145.

¹⁷Farrow, *Military Encyclopedia*, II, p. 464.

¹⁸James W. Sheire, *The 1876 Old Bakery, Fort Laramie National Historic Site, Wyoming* (Washington: National Park Service, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation, 1968), Part I, pp. 18, 19.

several hours, moisture was removed and crispness restored.¹⁹ Intermittently through the year the bakers scraped and washed the bakehouse walls, for the accumulation of soot from the ovens proved discomforting and unsanitary.²⁰

The number of men detailed to bakery duty varied with the number of rations required. Under normal conditions one baker excused from all other duty could produce 250 rations of bread per bake; beyond that figure two or more bakers were needed.²¹ Through most of the 1870s at Fort Laramie the troop complement ran between five and ten companies, suggesting the presence of two bakers much of the time.²²

Two requisites for baking were fuel and water. Soft water was best and at most forts daily details of soldiers filled and hauled barrels of river water by wagon for use in the bakery, kitchens, and quarters.²³ Fuel for the bakehouse came from the surrounding timber lands, and was supplied either by civilian contractors or by soldiers detailed to nearby wood camps.²⁴ Bakery ovens ran on excess fuel left over by troops in quarters. In some instances the ovens burned coal, although at many stations it was unavailable and, when shipped in, proved costly. As prescribed in regulations, merchantable hard wood, preferably oak, comprised the standard, with the cord equivalent to 128 cubic feet or 3195 pounds. Two cords of soft wood equalled one of hard and could be issued in lieu of the latter when circumstances dictated.²⁵ The chief baker insured that an adequate supply of fuel was always on hand.

Detailed for ten-day shifts by the Post Commander, the bakers

¹⁹*Revised United States Army Regulations of 1861* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1863), pp. 301-02 (hereafter cited as *A.R.*, 1863); *A.R.*, 1873, p. 175.

²⁰James Grant, *The Chemistry of Breadmaking* (London: Edward Arnold, 1912), p. 175.

²¹George Bell, *Notes on Breadmaking, Permanent and Field Ovens, and Bake Houses* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1882), p. 81. See also *Manual for Army Bakers, 1910* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1910), p. 68.

²²This is based on information contained in B. William Henry, Jr., "Regimental Units Stationed at Fort Laramie, 1849-1890" (Unpublished manuscript dated 1970 in the Fort Laramie National Historic Site library), pp. 7-9. "As a general rule, the total number of men employed in a Bakery can be determined by estimating each Baker will turn out seven hundred (700) rations daily, and adding one additional man, (as Clerk, Yeast Maker or Laborer as may be required,) for each three thousand (3000) rations turned out." Bell, *Notes on Breadmaking*, p. 36.

²³Don Rickey, Jr., *Forty Miles a Day on Beans and Hay: The Enlisted Soldier Fighting the Indian Wars* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1963), p. 97.

²⁴*Ibid.*

²⁵*A.R.*, 1873, p. 148; *A.R.*, 1895, p. 139; "Report of the Quartermaster-General," October 9, 1882, in *Report of the Secretary of War, 1882* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1882), p. 374.

worked long hours involving duty beyond the normal workday. A provision of the Army Appropriation Act of July, 1866, entitled them to twenty cents per diem extra duty pay when "employed on constant labor, of not less than ten days. . . ."²⁶ In the mid-1870s extra duty pay rose to thirty-five cents a day for clerks and mechanics, but stayed at twenty cents for "laborers."²⁷ The baker's compensation, along with other bakery expenses not otherwise provided by the Subsistence or Quartermaster's Departments, came from funds earmarked from savings on the flour ration which varied between twenty-eight and thirty-three percent over that actually issued as bread.²⁸

The Post Treasurer, who often simultaneously served as Commissary Officer, directly supervised bakehouse performance.²⁹ Frequent inspections were completed by him, the Commanding Officer, and the Post Surgeon to safeguard the health of the troops. If complaints of the quality of the bread occurred, the problem was investigated with dispatch, mainly because the officers themselves took their rations from the same source.³⁰

Post bakers and their assistants, freed from regular fatigue duty, executed all the details necessary for making bread. Most were ill-suited privates who abhorred the task, but occasionally a former civilian baker delighted in it. In the former case the bread frequently suffered; in the latter, depending on the quality of the flour, it could become very palatable.³¹ By 1875, the provision for the ten-day rotation was being widely ignored, and at some stations the chief baker, at least, continued in the position according to his particular competence.³²

A prime element of bakery procedure concerned cleanliness and sanitation. Probably bakers at frontier posts did not bathe and change their underwear daily as later manuals recommended, but they were expected to keep utensils and furniture clean at their

²⁶Circular on "Preservation and Care of Subsistence Stores," Headquarters, Department of the Platte, Office Chief Commissary of Subsistence, Omaha, Nebraska, September 14, 1866, p. 6 (hereafter cited as Circular, Department of the Platte, 1866).

²⁷A.R., 1873, p. 173. See also p. 34.

²⁸A.R., 1861, p. 246; *Manual for the Subsistence Department* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1902), p. 103; A.R., 1895, p. 43; *How to Feed an Army* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1901), p. 124.

²⁹A.R., 1873, p. 43; *Manual for the Subsistence Department*, p. 103.

³⁰A.R., 1863, p. 23; Ray H. Mattison, "The Army Post on the Northern Plains, 1865-1885," reprint from *Nebraska History*, XXXV (March, 1954), p. 14; *A Report on the Hygiene of the United States Army, with Descriptions of Military Posts* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1875), p. xxxv.

³¹Rickey, *Forty Miles A Day*, pp. 103, 110; A.R., 1895, p. 43.

³²This was especially true of army cooks. The inference is that the same was done in the case of bakers. See *Report on the Hygiene of the United States Army*, p. xxxix.

duty stations.³³ The "Cook's Creed" applied to bakers equally as well:

Cleanliness is next to godliness, both in persons and kettles. Be ever industrious, then, in scouring your pots. Much elbowgrease, a few ashes, and a little water are capital aids to the careful cook. Better wear out your pans with scouring than your stomachs with purging; and it is less dangerous to work your elbows than your comrade's bowels. Dirt and grease betray the poor cook, and destroy the poor soldier, while health, content, and good cheer should ever reward him who does his duty and keeps his kettles clean. In military life punctuality is not only a duty, but a necessity, and the cook should always endeavor to be exact in time. Be sparing with sugar and salt, as a deficiency can be better remedied than an overplus.³⁴

Maintaining sanitary bakery conditions, if sincerely attempted, proved a difficult but not impossible chore. Daily bakehouse clean ups typically occurred each morning after the dough had been molded and left to rise, a period of one and one-half hours. Boiling water, sometimes laced with lye, was used to scrub messpans, pots, and other metal utensils.³⁵ The *Manual for Army Cooks* recommended additional hints for cleaning:

Boil a handful of hay or grass in a new iron pot, before using it for cooking purposes. Then scrub it on the inside with soap and sand. Fill the pot with clean water, set it on the fire, and allow to boil half an hour. After this it is ready for use.

.

New tins should stand near the fire, filled with boiling water, in which has been dissolved a spoonful of soda. Soda is used to render soluble the rosin which has been used in soldering. Then scour with soft soap and rinse with hot water. Keep them clean by rubbing with sifted wood-ashes.

.

Never set a cooking utensil away without cleaning and drying it. If grease is left in the vessel, that will become rancid. If it is set aside wet, rust will be the result.

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Clean knives with soft flannel and bath-brick. If rusty, use wood-ashes rubbed on the knife with a freshly-cut portion of an Irish potato; this will remove all spots.³⁶

At least once a week, and preferably more often, the wooden

³³See *Manual for Army Bakers*, 1910, p. 68, A.R., 1863, p. 23.

³⁴James M. Sanderson, *Camp Fires and Camp Cooking; or, Culinary Hints for the Soldier* (Washington: Army of the Potomac, 1862), p. 4; also quoted in *Report on the Hygiene of the United States Army*, p. xl.

³⁵*Manual for Army Bakers*, 1910, p. 68; John W. Barriger (ed.), *Practical Instructions in Bread-Making* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1878), p. 11; L. R. Holbrook, *The Mess Officer's Assistant* (Junction City, Kansas: The Junction City Sentinel, 1911), p. 175.

³⁶*Manual for Army Cooks* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1879), pp. 18-19. See also the revised edition of 1883, pp. 25-26.



—National Park Service

View of 1876 Bakery at Fort Laramie as restored by the National Park Service. Note brickwork at right end harboring the reconstructed oven.

dough troughs were cleaned. These vessels frequently absorbed flour, yeast, and dough in the cracks and if not promptly attended could attract vermin, cause mold and bacteria to form, and account for sourness in the bread. The troughs were scraped and washed with a lye solution, then carted out into the sunlight to dry for an hour or two with other bakehouse accoutrements.³⁷ The bakers meantime brushed and cleaned the shelves, tables, and scales, swept the floor, and aired out the building.³⁸

Flour, of course, composed but one part of the soldier's ration, or daily subsistence allowance. Between the Civil War and the Spanish-American War this ration changed little,³⁹ and in 1873 comprised the following:

Twelve ounces of pork or bacon, or twenty ounces of fresh or salt beef, eighteen ounces of flour or twenty ounces corn meal, or sixteen ounces of hard bread; and to every one hundred rations, fifteen pounds of beans or ten pounds of rice, eight pounds of green coffee, or six pounds eight ounces of roasted (or roasted and ground) coffee, or two pounds of tea, twelve pounds of sugar, one gallon of vinegar, twenty ounces of adamantine candles, four pounds of soap, four pounds of salt, and two ounces of black pepper.⁴⁰

³⁷Barriger, *Practical Instructions*, p. 11; *Manual for Army Bakers*, 1910, pp. 65, 68; Grant, *Chemistry of Breadmaking*, pp. 174-75.

³⁸*Ibid.*, pp. 172, 174.

³⁹Risch, *Quartermaster Support of the Army*, p. 506.

⁴⁰*A.R.*, 1873, pp. 167-68; "Report of the Commissary-General of Subsistence," 1875, p. 312.

Substitutes for these items were permitted, such as mutton or fish for pork, and pickles for vinegar, and provisions for growing or purchasing fresh vegetables afforded some flexibility in the soldier's diet.⁴¹ Only the President might alter the overall ration according to health and economic needs, although the post commander might exercise minimal changes if required.⁴² An officer designated Acting Commissary of Subsistence controlled ration distribution at the post commissary, and issues were made every few days on the basis of ration returns signed by the company commanders.⁴³

As established by law in 1802, the ration allowed for a daily issue of eighteen ounces of soft bread or flour.⁴⁴ This remained fixed until the outbreak of the Civil War brought an increase to twenty-two ounces.⁴⁵ In 1864, economy compelled restoration of the former ration, and it stayed at eighteen ounces until the 1890s, although a General Order of 1875 permitted a ceiling of twenty-two ounces of bread at posts where vegetables could not be cultivated.⁴⁶ And a recommendation in the projected regulations of 1873 favored issuing twenty ounces of wheat when flour was unavailable.⁴⁷

Debate about the bread ration flourished during the post-Civil War years, especially in terms of the handling and disposition of savings accrued from it. Usually companies failed to muster the exact number of soldiers carried on their rolls, and the resulting surplus of non-flour rations, unless required for reissue, went back to the commissary or to local citizen traders in exchange for non-ration items.⁴⁸ But the eighteen ounces of flour issued a soldier and turned in for conversion at the post bakery would actually have yielded more bread than he was entitled to, yet he received back only eighteen ounces. Savings thus accrued from the flour issue sold as bread to civilians, the proceeds going into the Post Fund which was drawn on for buying fresh fruits, vegetables, and dairy products from local producers.⁴⁹ Under the system, savings from

⁴¹*Ibid.*; Risch, *Quartermaster Support of the Army*, p. 506.

⁴²H. L. Scott, *Military Dictionary* (New York: D. Van Nostrand, 1864), p. 487; *A.R.*, 1873, p. 43.

⁴³*Ibid.*, p. 168; Rickey, *Forty Miles a Day*, p. 118.

⁴⁴Samuel Breck, *Remarks on the Food of the U. S. Army* (Place of publication unknown, 1875), p. 1.

⁴⁵*Ibid.*, p. 3; *A.R.*, 1861, p. 243.

⁴⁶Breck, *Food of the U. S. Army*, p. 3; Jeremiah C. Allen (comp.), *Subject Index of the General Orders of the War Department from January 1, 1861, to December 31, 1890* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1892), p. 91.

⁴⁷*A.R.*, 1873, p. 168.

⁴⁸Rickey, *Forty Miles a Day*, p. 118; *A.R.*, 1895, p. 180.

⁴⁹Risch, *Quartermaster Support of the Army*, pp. 505-06; Scott, *Military Dictionary*, p. 78. Bread generally weighed five-sixteenths more than the flour it contained due to its water content. Barriger, *Practical Instructions*, p. 21.

the flour ration became substantial. At Fort Brown, Texas, savings aggregated over \$2000 in less than a year and a half for an average of 398 men.⁵⁰ Such profits, and the tendency to expend them for purposes unrelated to subsistence, generated much criticism among commissary officers towards the seeming attempt "to make the post bakery a money-making machine" for the support of libraries and bands to the detriment of the soldier's subsistence.⁵¹ Commissary General Eaton urged that the troops be given full use of their allotted ration. This, he maintained, would preclude any need for increases, while at the same time prevent diversion of the ration "from its legitimate purpose by the unjust contrivance called the post fund."⁵²

Income derived from the sale of bread to civilian Quartermaster employees and others ineligible to draw subsistence constituted the main element of the Post Fund. A tax placed on civilian post sutlers and based on the number of officers and men at a given post also contributed to post coffers.⁵³ By the mid-1870s expenses covered by the Post Fund included those for operation of the bakehouse, education of children and illiterate soldiers, music instruction for band members, maintenance of a library, procurement of seeds and tools for post gardens, religious training, and purchase of equipment for recreational activities.⁵⁴ Bakery expenses embraced extra duty pay and such articles as hops, yeast, lard, cloths, sieves, and furniture not supplied by the Quartermaster's Department.⁵⁵

The Post Commander managed the fund through the Post Council of Administration, composed of officers of the particular station and charged with matters of routine garrison performance. Appointed by the Commander, the Post Treasurer collected, accounted for, and made appropriate disbursements from, the Post Fund.⁵⁶ His account and vouchers were audited periodically by members of the Council, usually on the last day of April, August, and December and whenever the Treasurer was relieved of assignment.

⁵⁰"Report of the Commissary-General of Subsistence," October 10, 1881, in *Report of the Secretary of War, 1881* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1881), p. 506.

⁵¹*Ibid.*, p. 520; Risch, *Quartermaster Support of the Army*, p. 506.

⁵²"Report of the Commissary-General of Subsistence," 1881, p. 520.

⁵³*Ibid.*, p. 484; *A.R.*, 1863, p. 35; *A.R.*, 1895, p. 42; Scott, *Military Dictionary*, p. 449; Sheire, *1876 Old Bakery*, pp. 25-26.

⁵⁴*A.R.*, 1863, p. 35; *A.R.*, 1873, p. 43; *Report on the Hygiene of the United States Army*, p. xxvi. Concise descriptions of the Post, Regimental, and Company Funds are in Jack D. Foner, *The United States Soldier Between Two Wars: Army Life and Reforms, 1865-1898* (New York: The Humanities Press, 1970), pp. 21-23.

⁵⁵*A.R.*, 1861, p. 248; *A.R.*, 1863, p. 255.

⁵⁶*Ibid.*, p. 35; *A.R.*, 1873, p. 43. The Post Treasurer also served as Post Librarian. *Ibid.*

The Council filed its conclusions in a ledger sent through the Commanding Officer to Department Headquarters. Members also determined the pay of bakers and laundresses when necessary.⁵⁷ Further criticism of the Post Fund in the 1880s contended that the flour savings contribution failed to benefit individual soldiers. This might better be accomplished, believed the Commissary General, by dividing the savings proportionately among the companies.⁵⁸

After deducting bakery expenses, 50 percent of the Post Fund went to the Regimental Fund to be disbursed by the Regimental Treasurer according to needs of the unit, whether stationed at one post or at several.⁵⁹ At the lowest level, income for Company Funds depended on savings from the other ration components, along with money derived from boarding citizen employees at unit messes, selling company-raised livestock and produce, and distributing pro rata proceeds from the Regimental Fund. Responsible management of the Company Fund by a regularly convened Company Council of Administration allowed the soldiers to obtain furniture, books, tools, stencil-plates, and other items not authorized them by regulations.⁶⁰

The eighteen ounces of daily bread allotted the soldier came from flour not always of superior quality. Before the Civil War western garrisons received flour produced exclusively from wheat grown in the eastern states. Eastern wheat went through its "sweating" period in October, when excess moisture evaporated, and was cut and ground shortly thereafter. Fine, white flour resulted that, when baked correctly, gave tasty nourishment.⁶¹ Bad flour could be detected easily, and an alert army buyer might avoid it through conscious application of the following criteria:

HOW TO SELECT FLOUR. — 1. Look at its color; if it is white, with slight yellowish or straw colored tint, it is a good sign. If it is very white with a bluish cast or with black specks in it, the flour is not good. 2. Examine its adhesiveness — wet and knead a little of it between the fingers; if it works dry and elastic, it is good; if it works soft and sticky, it is poor. Flour made from Spring wheat is likely to be sticky. 3. Throw a little lump of dry flour against a dry, smooth, perpendicular surface, if it adheres in a lump the flour has life in it;

⁵⁷*A.R.*, 1863, p. 35; *A.R.*, 1873, p. 42; *Report on the Hygiene of the United States Army*, p. xxv.

⁵⁸"Report of the Commissary-General of Subsistence," 1883, p. 590.

⁵⁹*Report of the Hygiene of the United States Army*, p. xxvi; *A.R.*, 1873, pp. 43, 44.

⁶⁰*Ibid.*, pp. 44, 168; Sheire, *1876 Old Bakery*, p. 24; Breck, *Food of the U. S. Army*, p. 2; Rickey, *Forty Miles a Day*, p. 118; *Manual for Army Cooks* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1896), p. 49; August V. Kautz, *The Company Clerk: Showing How and When to Make Out All the Returns, Reports, Rolls, and Other Papers, and What to Do with Them* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott and Company, 1864), pp. 25, 27, 92.

⁶¹*Bread and Bread Making* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1864), p. 2.

if it falls like powder, it is bad. 4. Squeeze some of the flour in your hand; if it retain[s] the shape given by the pressure, that too is a good sign. Flour that will stand all these tests, it is safe to buy.⁶²

Dark specks in the flour signified the presence of cockle, mustard seed, or bran arising from poor grinding, while blue-colored flour contained dirt. Other determinants of good quality flour included its gritty sensation when rubbed between thumb and fingers, its absorbent abilities, and its dry, non-clammy properties.⁶³

Dry flour being preferable, the army contracted for that manufactured from southern-grown winter wheat. Before and during the Civil War, grain raised in Maryland, Virginia, Tennessee, Kentucky, Georgia, and the Carolinas sustained the troops. After the war, midwestern-grown winter and spring wheat from Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Missouri, and Texas gained favor despite its starchiness, chiefly because it was cheaper to ship west.⁶⁴ Still other varieties imported for army use came from such distant places as Chile.⁶⁵ At some points along the frontier local mills produced flour from grain imported from the East or grown regionally. In Texas the civilian-operated flour mills created a less satisfactory product than the St. Louis type generally used, while in adjacent New Mexico and in southern Colorado the troops subsisted on imported "States Flour" because, reported the Chief District Commissary, "it seems impossible to manufacture a good grade of flour in this Territory."⁶⁶ In the Department of Arizona, most forts obtained contract flour decidedly inferior to that produced for troops in nearby California.⁶⁷

From 1875 through 1878 the price of flour furnished army garrisons averaged 3.5 cents per pound. That purchased at Omaha cost 3.6 cents a pound in 1876.⁶⁸ Proper packing of the commodity was essential for preservation and for transport to its ultimate destination. Either barrels or 100-pound capacity cotton

⁶²Quoted from the *St. Louis Journal of Agriculture* in an undated clipping from an unidentified newspaper pasted opposite the table of contents of *ibid.*, copy in the National Archives Library.

⁶³*Bread and Bread Making*, pp. 2, 3, 4; C. L. Kilburn, *Notes on Preparing Stores for the United States Army; and On the Care of the Same, etc., with a Few Rules for Detecting Adulterations* (Cincinnati: W. A. Webb, 1863), p. 26.

⁶⁴*Ibid.*; *Bread and Bread Making*, p. 2; Bell, *Notes on Breadmaking*, p. 133.

⁶⁵Kilburn, *Notes on Preparing Stores*, p. 26. Before the Civil War many western stations utilized the popular Gallego or Haxall flour, produced at Richmond, Virginia. *Ibid.*

⁶⁶"Report of the Commissary-General of Subsistence," 1879, p. 380.

⁶⁷*Ibid.*

⁶⁸"Report of the Commissary-General of Subsistence," October 10, 1878, in *Report of the Secretary of War, 1878* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1878), p. 407; "Report of the Commissary-General of Subsistence," October 10, 1876, in *Report of the Secretary of War, 1876*, p. 303.

sacks sheathed in burlap were used, loosely packed to prevent the flour from caking. Barrels, fully head lined, expertly fashioned from strong, tight-fitting staves and secured with twelve half-round hickory hoops, each weighed about twenty-three pounds when empty. Inspection holes were plugged and capped to forestall leakage. Sacks gained preference over barrels, which often imparted sourness to the contents, but even then precautions against moisture and heat were observed.⁶⁹ Boards of Survey repeatedly condemned wet flour without noting that the bulk of the product, protected by the damp crust, yet remained sound.⁷⁰

At commissary depots, such as that at Omaha, flour was stored after purchase in warehouses, and usually on the middle tiers to avoid moisture from below and extreme heat from above.⁷¹ Upon delivery to a post the flour was kept in a storehouse, generally a single-story structure, and placed on shelves or platforms a few inches off the floor. Stored flour required good ventilation and subsistence personnel occasionally rolled it outside for airing to prevent its becoming lumpy and sour. Nor should it have been stored in close proximity to coffee, tobacco, fish, or similar strong-smelling commodities, for flour easily absorbed odors.⁷² Maintenance of warm atmospheric conditions in the storehouse helped protect the article, too, while intense heat or freezing damaged it. Room temperatures between 70° and 75° F. were recommended. Sometimes worms penetrated the surface of flour in storage, but they posed little threat to the bulk and could be removed by sifting the top few inches of the barrel or sack contents.⁷³

If flour grew sour either from transport or storage, its essence might be restored by blending with fresh flour of a variant grade. In fact, the best possible loaf bread was made from a mixture of several different textures of flour.⁷⁴ At forts in Arizona, New Mexico, and Texas, flour of a superior grade was introduced to mix with and bolster regionally produced kinds.⁷⁵

Good flour only partially comprised good bread. Much depended on making the dough and baking it, wherein order and method became paramount contributing factors. At large army bakeries, qualified foremen managed entire production staffs. At small posts the baker supervised one or two assistants. Operation

⁶⁹Bell, *Notes on Breadmaking*, pp. 134-35, 139; Kilburn, *Notes on Preparing Stores*, p. 28.

⁷⁰*Ibid.*, pp. 27-28; Circular, Department of the Platte, 1866, p. 3.

⁷¹*Ibid.*; Kilburn, *Notes on Preparing Stores*, p. 28.

⁷²A.R., 1861, p. 242; *How to Feed an Army*, p. 144; Bell, *Notes on Breadmaking*, p. 135.

⁷³*Ibid.*, pp. 135, 138-39.

⁷⁴Kilburn, *Notes on Preparing Stores*, p. 27; Circular, Department of the Platte, 1866, p. 3; Barriger, *Practical Instructions*, pp. 13, 14.

⁷⁵"Report of the Commissary-General of Subsistence," 1878, p. 405.

of the bakehouse involved heating and fueling the ovens, controlling water temperatures, sifting flour, making yeast, sponge, and dough, molding and scaling the dough, proofing and baking it, and policing the premises.⁷⁶

Flour, water, yeast, and salt composed the central ingredients of the bread recipe.⁷⁷ Lard was used to grease bread pans. In the absence of yeast, baking powder might be employed.⁷⁸ Flour was measured on counter scales, with one quart or five cupfuls to the pound.⁷⁹ Soft, mineral-free water, either that hauled from a river or pond, or rainwater allowed to settle, always stood ready.⁸⁰ Temperatures in the bakery varied greatly, but should never have fallen below 75° F.⁸¹

The first step in breadmaking lay in the manufacture of yeast, the fermenting agent that caused dough to rise. Several kinds were employed in army bakeries, including that manufactured from hops and potatoes. Malt or sugar additives made the yeast react quickly and increased fermentation. At some posts a combination of potato and hop yeast was used, and bakers at western stations employed dessicated potatoes for the purpose when they lacked freshly grown ones.⁸²

Yeast spores reproduced rapidly, emitting carbonic gas that gave dough its porous characteristics. Baking at high temperatures killed the fermenting organism, thus arresting the action while setting the dough.⁸³ Head yeast was created in a special wooden tub, cleaned and free of grease, by mixing flour with soft water from which boiled hops had been strained. Ground malt was added and the tub covered for twenty-four to thirty-six hours, during which time the yeast rose, fell, and settled. The resulting batter was strained before using.⁸⁴

The head yeast concentrate contributed to making a more diluted stock yeast, which actually fermented the dough prior to baking. Stock yeast consisted of flour, water, hops, malt, and head yeast, and its preparation essentially followed that for the latter, except for the larger quantities of elements employed. After adding the malt, a portion of the head yeast went into the batter, which was likewise covered for about twenty-four hours. A batch

⁷⁶*Bread and Bread Making*, pp. 37-38.

⁷⁷*Ibid.*, p. 9; Barriger, *Practical Instructions*, p. 13.

⁷⁸Holbrook, *Mess Officer's Assistant*, p. 143.

⁷⁹*Manual for Army Cooks* (1879), p. 19.

⁸⁰Barriger, *Practical Instructions*, p. 14; Grant, *Chemistry of Breadmaking*, pp. 16, 17.

⁸¹*Bread and Bread Making*, p. 39.

⁸²*Ibid.*, p. 17; Barriger, *Practical Instructions*, p. 2; Holbrook, *Mess Officer's Assistant*, p. 177.

⁸³*Ibid.*

⁸⁴Barriger, *Practical Instructions*, pp. 2, 3, 4-5; Sanderson, *Camp Fires and Camp Cooking*, p. 13.

of stock yeast might last for two weeks, though this was not recommended. A sensitive mixture, stock yeast often failed to perform properly because of climatic conditions; even the effects of a thunderstorm could threaten its utility.⁸⁵ Because stock yeast was always required, its preparation entailed a daily exercise for bakehouse employees.

Next came the process of making the sponge, the thick batter or dough leavening that impregnated ferment into the baking dough proper. Sponge utilized at least one third the total flour to prevent souring and escape of gas from the dough mass.⁸⁶ It was made by blending stock yeast with ample flour and water to a homogeneous consistency, then permitting the whole to rise and partially fall, a process lasting from six to eight hours for yeast made from flour and hops, and from three to four hours for the more energetic potato yeast.⁸⁷ With potato yeast, the sponge was turned when about half risen to facilitate consistent fermentation throughout the mass.⁸⁸ Sponge termed "green" or "young" was immature, while "rotten" sponge was old and sour. Sponge called "ripe" was ideal for making dough and at that time underwent "breaking," whereby more flour was added along with water containing dissolved salt. If sponge went beyond its ripe stage before breaking, it frequently made heavy, flat, sour bread.⁸⁹

In making the actual baking dough, lukewarm water and salt were added to the sponge. The salt additive strengthened the dough, whitened the bread, and deodorized possibly musty flour. It also enabled the dough to absorb more water; bakers thus made more bread with the flour allotted. At the same time, excess salt could retard fermentation and reduce the size of the bread loaf.⁹⁰ The remainder of the flour, thoroughly sifted, was placed with the moist sponge in a wooden trough and kneaded with the hands, a little at a time, until smooth and free of lumps. Dough properly mixed could be checked by indenting with the hand; if it withdrew easily the dough was suitably prepared. It then remained in the kneading trough to rise and expand from two to five hours, depending on the type and strength of yeast employed.⁹¹

After the dough had risen enough the bakers "scaled" it, dividing it into equal weight portions of twenty ounces, then carefully molded these into loaves two inches thick and placed them in well-

⁸⁵Barriger, *Practical Instructions*, pp. 6-7, 8, 9, 11-12.

⁸⁶*Ibid.*, pp. 15, 16.

⁸⁷*Ibid.*, p. 17.

⁸⁸*Ibid.*, p. 18.

⁸⁹*Ibid.*, pp. 17, 18, 19, 23; Holbrook, *Mess Officer's Assistant*, pp. 174-75.

⁹⁰Barriger, *Practical Instructions*, pp. 15, 19; *Bread and Bread Making*, p. 9. Bakers generally figured one ounce of salt to ten pounds of flour.

⁹¹*Ibid.*, p. 13; Barriger, *Practical Instructions*, pp. 17, 19; Holbrook, *Mess Officer's Assistant*, p. 153.

greased bread pans.⁹² To prevent the crusts from becoming hard during rising, the bakers rubbed melted lard over the loaves, which were then covered with cloth or placed in a closed "proof rack." This enabled them to retain the internal heat caused by fermentation. Proofing called for alertness by the baker, because dough allowed to rise too much might fall and produce sour, heavy bread; conversely, that risen too little could make heavy, damp loaves. Once risen sufficiently, the dough was ready for baking.⁹³

Before inserting the dough, however, the ovens had to be prepared to receive it. Firing them occurred earlier, during preparation of the dough or while it was rising, and at least two hours before baking began. At Fort Laramie and other stations where timber existed in quantity, wood became the standard fuel. Pine or spruce best served the purpose.⁹⁴ Moreover, the earliest ovens at Fort Laramie were probably of common brick instead of the heat-resistant firebrick later employed, and wood was preferred to fuel them.⁹⁵ Each oven needed about twenty-four cubic feet of wood to heat it from a cold state. The damper plates in the flues remained open during initial firing, then were closely regulated to control the draft. Subsequent bakings required less wood, for the oven retained considerable heat.⁹⁶ Throughout the firing the baker dutifully emptied the ash pit while guarding against extreme temperatures. Skilled control of the flues insured uniformity of heat through the oven and, once accomplished, most of the flues could be closed. As baking time approached, the fire was permitted to die, and its ashes were either removed or covered to protect the bread.⁹⁷

When oven temperature reached a point between 550° and 580° F., the dough could be inserted.⁹⁸ Correct temperature was of crucial importance, as bread baked well between 320° and 400° F., and the ovens often lost extensive heat during introduction of the dough, a process that lasted from five minutes to

⁹²Barriger, *Practical Instructions*, pp. 19, 20; *Bread and Bread Making*, pp. 7, 13.

⁹³Barriger, *Practical Instructions*, p. 20.

⁹⁴*Bread and Bread Making*, p. 35; *Manual for Army Bakers*, 1910, p. 61.

⁹⁵*Ibid.*, p. 24. Ovens built of common brick generally lasted two or three years without major repair. *Ibid.* Those built in 1874 and 1876 at Fort Laramie contained firebrick, but probably wood rather than coal fueled them because of its availability. See Sheire, *1876 Old Bakery*, pp. 5, 17, 18.

⁹⁶*Bread and Bread Making*, pp. 31, 34-35.

⁹⁷*Ibid.*, p. 31. Good oven maintenance brought good performance. The flues should have been cleaned every ten days or so to improve the draft, a job completed by means of a quick wood fire. A moistened gunny sack fixed to a long pole was used to swab the oven walls clean, as water thrown freely onto the brick might cause cracks. *Manual for Army Bakers*, 1910, p. 62.

⁹⁸*Bread and Bread Making*, pp. 32, 34.

twenty.⁹⁹ More sophisticated ovens contained built-in pyrometers to gauge temperatures from 200° to 700° F. The instrument consisted of two metals soldered to form a ribbon that expanded or contracted with the heat to move a clock-like dial upwards or downwards.¹⁰⁰ For ovens not so equipped, the baker determined the temperature. One method was to toss a few pinches of white flour onto the hearth; if it assumed a yellowish color the oven was right for baking; if it remained white, or turned dark brown, the heat was either too low or too high.¹⁰¹ Another method, outlined in the technical manuals, involved a less attractive procedure:

If the hand and naked arm can be held within the oven for fifteen seconds the temperature is about right. If this cannot be done without distress the oven is too hot. If the exposed part can be held comfortably in the oven for this length of time, it is too cold. This method allows the cook to determine the proper degree of heat approximately. Experience will enable him to arrive at it precisely.¹⁰²

Most ovens possessed qualities unique one from another, and bakers had to adjust to such peculiarities over time. Unless an enlisted man was more or less permanently detailed as baker, the ten-day rotating tour at post bakeries compounded problems of bread production. In double ovens, such as those built at Fort Laramie in 1874 and 1876, the area near the common partition grew hotter than other parts, necessitating the placing of dough in cooler areas away from the wall.¹⁰³ As the dough baked, fermentation accelerated until arrested by the heat. At that point the high temperature fixed the dough mass, now made porous and spongy by action of the yeast germ. Baking progress was sometimes noted by means of a small gas burner placed within the oven. Under no circumstances should the door have been opened, for cold air damaged the dough. Baking lasted from one to one and one-half hours, after which time the bread was removed fully

⁹⁹Bell, *Notes on Breadmaking*, p. 80; Holbrook, *Mess Officer's Assistant*, pp. 143-44; Barriger, *Practical Instructions*, p. 22; *Manual for Army Cooks* (1879), p. 15.

¹⁰⁰Bell, *Notes on Breadmaking*, p. 80; Grant, *Chemistry of Breadmaking*, p. 32.

¹⁰¹Barriger, *Practical Instructions*, pp. 21-22; *Bread and Bread Making*, p. 31.

¹⁰²*Manual for Army Cooks* (1879), p. 15. "The only practical method of getting the temperature of an oven is to insert the hand well into it and count the *number of seconds* that you are able to keep it there." "The burning sensation experienced about the roots of the nails is sufficiently uniform . . . to render this a reliable method. . . ." Holbrook, *Mess Officer's Assistant*, p. 33. "To count seconds, repeat moderately slowly: 0-1,000, 1-1,000, 2-1,000, and the small numbers indicated will correspond very closely with the number of seconds." *Ibid.*, p. 167.

¹⁰³*Manual for Army Bakers*, 1910, p. 61.

prepared.¹⁰⁴ If baked correctly it exhibited uniformly brown coloration with crust adhering tightly to the crumb, which was neither hard nor pasty. When cut, it should have been white, spongy, and sweet of odor.¹⁰⁵ After removal from the oven, the bakers stacked the loaves in boxes or on shelves to await distribution. No bread was issued until a day old, as prescribed in regulations, for freshly baked bread, however palatable, was indigestible and considered unhealthy for consumption.¹⁰⁶ Usually two, perhaps three, bakings occurred in a single day, after which the oven dampers were all secured to retain as much heat as possible for the next day's use.¹⁰⁷

On the frontier the frequency of unqualified, inexperienced, or unreliable bakers added to problems of inferior flour and other unsatisfactory bread components. Bad bread resulted from numerous factors. Sour or musty flour, unless mixed with sweet, produced a poor ration. Likewise, that manufactured from wheat grown in sandy soil, or flour deficient in lime, made weak bread that when eaten caused dyspepsia, diarrhea, or even colic.¹⁰⁸ The use of too many hops or damaged hops in yeast-making could give bread a rank odor, while hops boiled too long made it bitter.¹⁰⁹ At the same time, yeast unduly fermented, or the introduction of excessive yeast into the dough, caused the bread to taste sour. A combination of bad flour, imperfect yeast, and too much water produced dark, raw, sour, and soggy loaves.¹¹⁰ Defects in the sponge, despite their extent, always passed to the dough in one form or another. Imperfect kneading that permitted the dough to chill or to retain lumps left bread sour, heavy, and without smooth grain.¹¹¹ Under-proofed loaves also became heavy as well as close-grained, while those over-proofed fell in the oven, becoming heavy, flat, and coarse-grained. Correct oven heat was essential; if too low, a soft and pasty product emerged; if too hot, the bread became "underbaked," whereby a thick-forming crust retained too much water in the interior of the loaves, resulting in soggy bread.¹¹²

¹⁰⁴*Bread and Bread Making*, pp. 5, 7, 31; Bell, *Notes on Breadmaking*, p. 80; Holbrook, *Mess Officer's Assistant*, p. 61; Barriger, *Practical Instructions*, p. 21.

¹⁰⁵*Ibid.*, p. 20; *Bread and Bread Making*, pp. 7, 9-10.

¹⁰⁶*Ibid.*, pp. 7, 49; *A.R.*, 1863, p. 23. Stale bread was that in which moisture had joined with the crumb to produce an impression of dryness. Holbrook, *Mess Officer's Assistant*, p. 175.

¹⁰⁷*Manual for Army Bakers, 1910*, p. 62.

¹⁰⁸Barriger, *Practical Instructions*, p. 24; *Report on the Hygiene of the United States Army*, p. xxxv. Lime deficiency could be remedied by mixing the flour in lime-impregnated water, a corrective measure practiced by army bakeries during the Civil War. *Ibid.*, pp. xxxv-xxxvi.

¹⁰⁹Barriger, *Practical Instructions*, pp. 23, 24, 25.

¹¹⁰*Ibid.*, pp. 13, 23, 24.

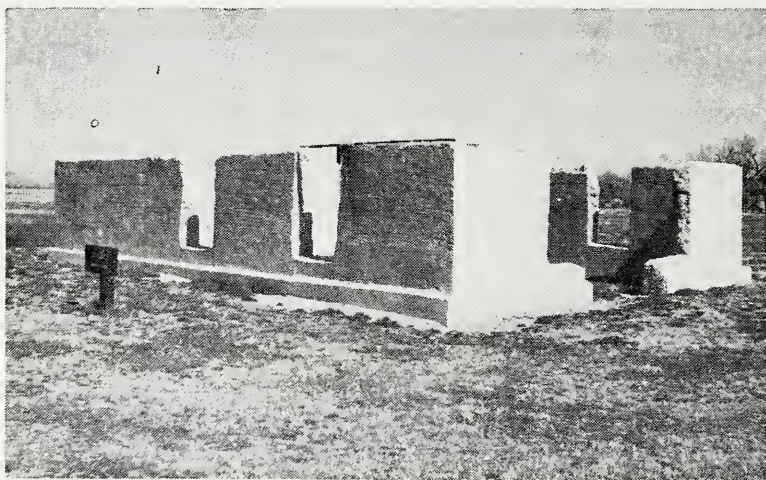
¹¹¹*Ibid.*, p. 24.

¹¹²*Ibid.*, pp. 21, 24, 25; *Bread and Bread Making*, p. 8. In some instances

An adequate bread ration depended as much on quality ingredients as on attentive performance by the bakers. Enlisted men who involuntarily assumed responsibilities beyond their capabilities, the bakers often labored under adverse circumstances and much rested with good fortune if the garrison was nourished by their product. Furthermore, breadmaking was subjected to forces external to the bakehouse. Weather affected yeast and flour, and their properties experienced effects of climatic and seasonal transitions. Compelled to consider such matters, post bakers faced bewildering, complicated work that fully taxed their abilities. That they succeeded at all is as much a tribute to them as to the army that subsisted on their produce.

The four bakeries that intermittently stood at Fort Laramie between 1849 and 1890 performed vital services for the soldiers stationed there. While substantive data pertaining to their design and function over the years is lacking, something of their operation can be discerned from available fragmentary evidence. Periodic inspection reports furnished information about their structural condition from which to draw inferences regarding their overall utility. Together with brief references contained in the post administrative records and other sources, this data gives a somewhat generalized overview of bakehouse operation at Fort Laramie throughout much of the post's active existence.

The first bakery lasted until about 1872. Constructed of adobe with one brick oven capable of handling 500 rations at once, or 1500 per day, this building measured seventeen by twenty-six feet



—National Park Service

RUINS OF THE 1884 BAKEHOUSE AT FORT LARAMIE

and had a fifteen- by fifteen-foot sleeping compartment for the bakers attached to its east end. In 1867 army inspectors pronounced it "unserviceable;" by 1871 it was described as "poor" and needed replacement.¹¹³ The next bakehouse, built of concrete about 1872, lasted four years, during which time it functioned adequately despite some problems occasioned by faulty ovens. In October, 1873, the Post Council of Administration found it in excellent condition, and a report by the Post Surgeon the following August asserted that "the Post Bakery is new and approved by all."¹¹⁴ There is evidence of a coal house at the post at this time, but the bakehouse ovens doubtless used wood, the coal going to fuel heating stoves in the various quarters.¹¹⁵ By 1876 the bakehouse stood in disrepair and a new one was needed.¹¹⁶

The rectangular structure built in 1876 was erected at the same location as, and incorporated some of the foundation of, the 1872 bakery. Made of brick and concrete, this unit remained serviceable until 1884, when it became a schoolhouse for post dependents. An 1881 inspection rated it in "good" condition. Four years later the Post Quartermaster termed it only fair and noted that \$8.50 had been spent on repairs to the structure, possibly the cost of converting it into a schoolhouse.¹¹⁷ Apparently cracks appeared in the 1876 bakery, necessitating construction of a new one in 1884.¹¹⁸ Built of concrete, it housed two ovens and served until the fort was abandoned in 1890. It later functioned as a granary when civilians moved onto the grounds, and still later as an icehouse and horse barn. Fire partially consumed it in the 1920s,

under-baking might yield as many as 100 four-pound loaves from 280 pounds of flour, such was the amount of water contained in the bread after baking. *Ibid.*

¹¹³"Medical History," Section One, Introductory Articles & August, 1868 to December, 1879; LeRoy R. Hafen and Francis Marion Young, *Fort Laramie and the Pageant of the West, 1834-1890* (Glendale: The Arthur H. Clark Company, 1938), p. 355; Agnes Wright Spring, *Caspar Collins: The Life and Exploits of an Indian Fighter of the Sixties* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1927), p. 147; *Outline Description of U.S. Military Posts and Stations in the Year 1871* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1872), p. 221.

¹¹⁴Historical Reference File, Fort Laramie (hereafter cited as HRF, FOLA). The quote appears in "Medical History," Section One.

¹¹⁵Hafen and Young, *Fort Laramie*, p. 403.

¹¹⁶*Outline Descriptions of the Posts in the Military Division of the Missouri* (Chicago: Headquarters, Military Division of the Missouri, 1876; Reprint, Fort Collins, Colorado: The Old Army Press, 1972), p. 97.

¹¹⁷"Inspection Report of Fort Laramie, Sept. 1, 1881," in the Research Files, FOLA; Inspection report, August 28 and 29, 1884, in the Research Files, FOLA; "Report of Condition of Buildings," March 31, 1885, in HRF, FOLA; "Report of Condition, Capacity, &c. of Public Buildings at Fort Laramie, Wyo. on 31st March, 1888," in HRF, FOLA.

¹¹⁸Interview with Tom and Will Sandercock, 12/11/40, by Jess Lombar, in HRF, FOLA; Hafen and Young, *Fort Laramie*, p. 388.

though its remnant still stands at Fort Laramie National Historic Site.¹¹⁹

Throughout Fort Laramie's military tenure the bread ration produced at these bakeries fluctuated according to garrison requirements. In the 1870s bread was issued every day of the week and constituted part of nearly every meal. While the precise ration at Fort Laramie remains unknown, comparable menus from other western stations suggest that the troops ate bread at least twice daily. Soldiers at Fort Klamath, Oregon; Camp Grant, Arizona; and Benicia Barracks, California, received bread for breakfast, dinner, and supper. The ration at Fort Sanders, Wyoming, in 1875 varied slightly, with no bread issued for dinner on Tuesdays and Thursdays.¹²⁰ The menu at Fort Laramie probably differed negligibly. Whatever the ration, the baker's responsibility lay in producing anywhere from 200 to 700 eighteen-ounce loaves daily to feed a garrison that during the 1870s numbered from a low of about 200 officers and men to a high of about 650.¹²¹

General supervision of the Fort Laramie bakery fell to the Post Council of Administration which controlled the Post Fund, a reserve largely derived from savings on the flour ration. Proper expenditure of the proceeds did not embrace subsistence items, although adverse frontier conditions often affected departures from the regulations when troops sought sustenance from fresh vegetables. In 1886 and 1867, however, irregularities arose in the handling of the fund, apparently in connection with its disbursement for foodstuffs. The matter was duly reported to the Adjutant General, probably by the Post Surgeon, and the Post Commander received instructions to investigate the case through the Council of Administration. Close scrutiny disclosed errors in the disposition of the fund that implicated both the Post Treasurer and Post Adjutant, as well as the Regimental Treasurer of the Second Cavalry. Whatever the extent of the problem, the Council resolved it by August, 1867.¹²²

Post Council members also considered means of increasing the bakery savings, as they did at their September, 1873, meeting,

¹¹⁹Inspection report, August 28 and 29, 1884, in the Research Files, FOLA; Miscellaneous manuscripts in the Research Files, FOLA; "Interview with Tom and Will Sandercock," in HRF, FOLA; "Information secured by Wilfred Hill from Harry Latta, August, 1940," in HRF, FOLA.

¹²⁰*Report on the Hygiene of the United States Army*, p. xlv.

¹²¹Information computed from "Monthly Troop Strengths and Principal Officers at Fort Laramie," in the Research Files, FOLA. Some idea of the number of company units at Fort Laramie for any given period, and thus of the approximate size of the troop complement, can be gauged from material in Henry, "Regimental Units Stationed at Fort Laramie, 1849-1890," *passim*.

¹²²"Medical History," Section One; Post Council of Administration (PCA) briefs in HRF, FOLA.

convened for that reason by the Commanding Officer, who simultaneously solicited members' views on reducing the bread ration.¹²³ During the first half of 1874 accrued savings for the Post Fund averaged \$110 per month.¹²⁴ By 1881 bakery savings at Fort Laramie totaled \$129.12 for the months of March and April. Together with a tax of 5 cents levied by the Council on the Post Trader for each of the 315 officers and men at the post, the fund aggregated \$160.62, from which \$80.31 was apportioned to Regimental Funds of the Fourth Infantry and Fifth Cavalry. The bakery savings for August, 1881, contributed \$53.59 to the Post Fund.¹²⁵ Bakehouse expenses ran from \$30 to \$40 a month.¹²⁶

The Council of Administration further recommended changes in the allotted bread ration according to garrison needs and economy. Upward alterations in the ration mainly reflected compensatory measures for the absence of a post garden through much of Fort Laramie's occupation. In May, 1869, the Post Commander, acting on the recommendation of the Council, directed a temporary increase to twenty ounces in the bread ration.¹²⁷ Similar increases occurred, and in May, 1877, the absence of potatoes and onions in garrison forced Commanding Officer Andrew W. Evans to raise the bread ration to twenty-two ounces, an order he rescinded the following October.¹²⁸ The Post Council made other suggestions affecting the bakery, too, such as that in January, 1873, concerning storage facilities and sleeping quarters in the new 1872 bakehouse:

It is recommended that the Post Quartermaster be ordered to have made without delay a suitable place in the storeroom of the Bakery,

¹²³Second Lieutenant William W. McCammon to Captain Ilges Guido, September 7, 1873, Fort Laramie, Letters Sent, in the Research Files, FOLA, McCammon to Post Treasurer, Second Lieutenant Albert Austin, September 11, 1873, in *ibid*.

¹²⁴"Medical History," Section One.

¹²⁵PCA briefs in HRF, FOLA.

¹²⁶This is based on the \$30 figure given for bakery costs in 1865. Post Adjutant S. B. White to an unidentified captain, December 14, 1865, in HRF, FOLA.

¹²⁷Post Adjutant George O. Webster to Post Treasurer, Captain Phineas P. Barnard, May 9, 1869, PCA briefs in HRF, FOLA. *Outline Description of U. S. Military Posts*, p. 221, mentions that "no crops can be raised or gardens sustained but by constant irrigation." On August 20, 1874, the Post Surgeon wrote of the need to purchase fresh vegetables "at a Post such as this where there is no Post garden." "Medical History," Section One. See also Major A. W. Evans to Assistant Adjutant General, Department of the Platte, November 27, 1876, in HRF, FOLA. In 1875, however, there appears to have been a garden at the fort. Hafen and Young, *Fort Laramie*, p. 403. Some officers blamed the high desertion rate on the absence of fresh vegetables at some western posts. Foner, *United States Soldier*, p. 8.

¹²⁸Fort Laramie General Orders Nos. 42 and 85, 1877, in HRF, FOLA. This was in compliance with General Order No. 42 of The Adjutant General's Office, 1875. See Evans to Assistant Adjutant General, Department of the Platte, November 27, 1876, in HRF, FOLA.

in which, to store the Bread after it is baked, the one now in use is reported to the Council by the Post Treasurer as being entirely inadequate for the use required of it. The Council also recommend that the room or building used by the Bakers as a sleeping room be completed according to the suggestions made to the Council by the Post Treasurer.¹²⁹

And in September, 1873, the Post Treasurer received instructions from the Council to see that the bread "loaves be moulded in less square form and as oblong as practicable."¹³⁰

The Post Treasurer governed distribution of the bread ration. Bread sold to citizen employees cost fifteen cents a loaf in 1865, a price established by the Post Council.¹³¹ The fare of the soldiers came first, however, and a directive to the Post Treasurer from the Commanding Officer in May, 1876, ordered "that no bread be sold to civilians, until you have gained at the bakehouse one days issue, so as to have stale bread for the troops."¹³² Normally the men picked up their rations at ten-day intervals, depositing their flour with the baker and the rest with their respective company kitchens.¹³³ By the 1870s bread was issued from the Fort Laramie bakery on the basis of tickets sold or distributed by the Post Treasurer. A post circular of November 8, 1876, announced that

Hereafter the sales of Bread Tickets by the Post Treasurer to Officers and enlisted men will be daily between the hours of 9 A.M. and 10 A.M. The issue of tickets on orders of the A.C.S. [Acting Commissary of Subsistence] will be at the same hours, except on the days rations are issued when they will be issued by the Post Treasurer between the hours of 5.30 and 6.30 P.M. All issues and sales of Bread Tickets will be made by the Post Treasurer at his quarters.¹³⁴

A post directive of January, 1879, required tickets to be distributed on a cash-only basis for extra rations, the daily allotment being certified by a company "due bill" endorsed daily by either the Post Treasurer or the baker and collected by the baker after each ten-day period.¹³⁵ In July, 1880, the use of bread tickets ceased altogether in favor of specific orders signed by the Post Treasurer or the Commissary Sergeant. Henceforth the bread ration issued mainly from the commissary storehouse instead of from the

¹²⁹PCA briefs in HRF, FOLA.

¹³⁰Post Adjutant, Second Lieutenant William W. McCammon, to Post Treasurer, Second Lieutenant Albert Austin, September 11, 1873, Fort Laramie, Letters Sent, in the Research Files, FOLA.

¹³¹Post Adjutant S. B. White to an unidentified captain, December 14, 1865, in HRF, FOLA.

¹³²Post Adjutant to Post Treasurer, First Lieutenant James Regan, May 14, 1876, Fort Laramie, Letters Sent, in the Research Files, FOLA.

¹³³"Ration Return of H Company, 14th Regiment of Infantry, for 10 days, commencing the 21 day of June, 1873, and ending the 30 days of June, 1873," in Miscellaneous manuscripts, FOLA.

¹³⁴Post Circular No. 19, November 8, 1876, in the Research Files, FOLA.

¹³⁵Fort Laramie General Order No. 1, January 2, 1879, in HRF, FOLA.

bakery, and distribution took place daily between 1:00 P.M. and 2:30 P.M.¹³⁶

Aside from administration and distribution of the bread ration, its actual production at Fort Laramie sometimes confronted major difficulties. During the late 1860s supply proved a problem, especially when the fort's own holdings were drawn on to subsist other garrisons. In the spring of 1867, 56,000 pounds of flour were sent to Fort Philip Kearny, headquarters of the Mountain District and one of three posts built to guard the Bozeman Trail from Indian harassment. By June, Fort Laramie's troops had none. "We are now entirely out of flour here," wrote Commanding Officer (Lieutenant Colonel) Innis Palmer, to the commander at Fort Kearny, "and there is only a sufficient quantity of hard bread to last my command about twelve days and I can hear of no supplies enroute to us." The next day Palmer dispatched four men to Fort Sedgwick, Colorado Territory, to seek flour supplies for his troops.¹³⁷

Sometimes the quality of flour suffered, causing poor bread, especially if prepared by ill-trained bakers. Complaints of "second-rate" flour circulated in 1863. In May, 1872, some bad flour was on hand, and the Commanding Officer noted the need for a frost-free room in the bakery, probably to house loaves awaiting issue.¹³⁸ Exactly five years later Post Surgeon Albert Hartsuff reported that the bread ration was "black, heavy, sour, and indigestible. The cooling is indifferent, but as good as the faulty system of soldiers detailed for that purpose, many of whom know absolutely nothing about cooking, will allow."¹³⁹ The surgeon mellowed his remarks in his next report, that of June, 1877, after having discussed the matter with the Post Treasurer and the Commissary Officer. He noted that the bread "was coarse and dark only because made of inferior flour which happened to be at the time the only kind of flour at the Post." By June new flour had arrived and, Hartsuff concluded, "the bread is now good."¹⁴⁰ But again, in May, 1882, bad bread provoked comment from the Post Surgeon, who blamed it on the quality of "'Utah flour,' which is coarse, deficient in gluten and has caused complaint and loss of rations to companies. . . ."¹⁴¹ By the following month the problem had been resolved. "The inferior Utah flour is now mixed before baking with three parts of good flour [of the] 'Wasatch' 'New

¹³⁶Fort Laramie General Order No. 64, July 28, 1880, in HRF, FOLA.

¹³⁷Palmer to Colonel John E. Smith, June 9, 1867, in HRF, FOLA.

¹³⁸Spring, *Caspar Collins*, p. 145; Commanding Officer to Assistant Adjutant General, Department of the Platte, May 8, 1872, Fort Laramie, Letters Sent, in Research Files, FOLA.

¹³⁹"Medical History," Section One.

¹⁴⁰*Ibid.*

¹⁴¹"Medical History," May, 1882.

Process' 'Garden City Mills' etc [brands], and makes very good bread."¹⁴²

Yet bread quality still alternated between good and bad. In January, 1883, complaints of frozen bread came from the post hospital and the company messes.¹⁴³ And in March, 1887, Post Surgeon Arthur W. Taylor urged discontinuing the bread issue altogether because of the musty flour used. "Wholesome bread cannot be made from this flour," he reported, "and the mixing of good flour with this diseased [sic] flour will not remedy the trouble. . . ."¹⁴⁴ Taylor renewed his recommendation in April, warning that "the approach of warm weather makes this bread doubly dangerous. . . ."¹⁴⁵ On May 6, pursuant to the admonition, the Post Commander ordered the offensive flour destroyed.¹⁴⁶ Thereafter, until the post was abandoned, the soldiers encountered few major problems with the bread ration.¹⁴⁷

Whether conversions occurred in the breadmaking process to compensate for the altitude at Fort Laramie remains unknown. The bakers, either men detailed daily from the companies or extra duty personnel more permanently assigned to the bakehouse, came under general management of the Post Treasurer.¹⁴⁸ Sometimes they answered to him for infractions that not only compromised the bakery operation, but denied their own competence and responsibility. One such instance arose in July, 1872, when Private George Snyder reported drunk for bakehouse duty. As the Post Adjutant recounted the incident,

He was excused from proceeding to work at once and permitted to return to the barrack to get sober, since which time he has not been at the bakery. The Commanding Officer directs that if Snyder is with his company, he be ordered to report at once to the Post Treasurer and account for his absence.¹⁴⁹

Because of their work, the bakers were normally excused from all fatigue duty, parades, and monthly troop inspections.¹⁵⁰ Their numbers varied with the bread needs of the garrison. In September, 1873, for example, three men worked in the bakehouse until

¹⁴²"Medical History," June, 1882.

¹⁴³Commanding Officer to Post Treasurer, January 18, 1883, Fort Laramie, Letters Sent, in Research Files, FOLA.

¹⁴⁴"Medical History," March, 1887.

¹⁴⁵"Medical History," April, 1887.

¹⁴⁶*Ibid.*

¹⁴⁷An entry recorded in the "Medical History" for July, 1889, reads: "The rations are well cooked and of as good quality as can be obtained."

¹⁴⁸Sheire, *1876 Old Bakery*, p. 24.

¹⁴⁹Post Adjutant to Company Commander, July 18, 1872, Fort Laramie, Letters Sent. Quoted in *ibid.*, p. 4.

¹⁵⁰Post Circular No. 45, May 30, 1878, in the Research Files, FOLA. See also circulars for September 29, 1878, and January 30, 1879, in *ibid.*

the Commanding Officer deemed that two would suffice.¹⁵¹ Increments in the troop complement precipitated increases in the bakery staff. In January, 1878, the Post Treasurer asked that "Private George Sillence Co. A 3d Cav. be redetailed on extra-duty in Post Bakery—The single baker now on such duty will not be able to do the work required for the increased garrison."¹⁵² As of September, 1887, two bakers made the bread at Fort Laramie, earning extra duty pay of fifty cents and thirty-five cents a day, respectively. Reported an inspector:

They are excused from guard duty, attending all drills, &c. The weight of the bread ration here is twenty two ounces, and this weight of the loaf was verified in my presence. Suitable rules regulate issues and sales. But one oven is in serviceable condition and this has a capacity of five hundred rations, requiring the men to bake four times a week.¹⁵³

Nearly two years later an inspector stated that "the bake house is in good condition and well policed. The ovens are in good order. But one oven is used. Its capacity is 470 rations."¹⁵⁴ Doubtless no more than two bakers were employed at that time.

Before the completion of the Union Pacific Railroad to Cheyenne, Fort Laramie received flour by wagon trains that lumbered up the Platte River Road from Nebraska. After 1868, shipments came by train. Their frequent arrival and fresher quality made it unnecessary to maintain large quantities at the post.¹⁵⁵ Whereas in 1871 about six months subsistence was always on hand, by 1876 better transportation made a three-month supply sufficient.¹⁵⁶ Most stores came from the depot at Omaha, although by 1870 some commissary supplies were available from Denver.¹⁵⁷ Stored in bulk at the Camp Carlin sub-depot near Fort D. A. Russell and Cheyenne, they were delivered the eighty-nine miles to Fort Laramie via government wagons.¹⁵⁸ At the post bulk flour was kept in

¹⁵¹Post Adjutant, Second Lieutenant William W. McCammon, to Post Treasurer, Second Lieutenant Albert Austin, September 11, 1873, Fort Laramie, Letters Sent, in the Research Files, FOLA.

¹⁵²Post Treasurer A. J. Gray to Post Adjutant, January 29, 1878, in Miscellaneous manuscripts, FOLA.

¹⁵³Inspection report, September 1, 2, and 3, 1887, in the Research Files, FOLA.

¹⁵⁴Inspection report, July 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8, 1889, in the Research Files, FOLA.

¹⁵⁵Risch, *Quartermaster Support of the Army*, p. 505.

¹⁵⁶*Outline Description of U. S. Military Posts*, p. 221; *Outline Descriptions of the Posts in the Military Division of the Missouri*, p. 97; "Inspection of Fort Laramie, Sept. 1, 1881," in the Research Files, FOLA.

¹⁵⁷"Report of the Commissary-General of Subsistence," October 12, 1870, in *Report of the Secretary of War, 1870* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1870), pp. 265-66.

¹⁵⁸*Outline Description of U. S. Military Posts*, pp. 221, 260; *Outline Descriptions of the Posts in the Military Division of Missouri*, p. 97.

either of two storehouses, while a portion went to the issuing room ready for distribution. Other commodities for bakery use, including hops, lard, lard oil, salt, soap, sperm candles, and canned yeast powder, remained in the storehouses until needed.¹⁵⁹

The troops procured water and wood locally, the latter mostly from civilian contractors.¹⁶⁰ The price of wood, principally pine and cedar, differed through the years, but in 1881 averaged about \$7 per cord.¹⁶¹ By that time civilian ranches and settlements in the area needed fuel, too; to forestall wood shortages for the troops the government in that year established a timber reservation in the Laramie Mountains thirty-five miles west of the post.¹⁶² Through the 1870s water for bakery and other uses was hauled from the Laramie River and dispensed by water wagon, a large tank mounted on wheels.¹⁶³ Most drinking water came from several wells located on the premises, although in 1877 Surgeon Hartsuff, reporting sickness from those sources, recommended that drinking water be obtained from the river.¹⁶⁴

Besides its use for drinking and breadmaking purposes, water was necessary to control fires. Despite the lack of evidence for the presence of fire-fighting equipment in the bakehouse, it seems conceivable that it existed there in some degree. The army supplied fire extinguishers as early as 1871, and Fort Laramie received three Babcock machines in that year. One went to the Post Quartermaster's office, the others to that of the Commissary Officer. None were furnished the storehouses, where water buckets constituted the sole means for combating blazes. Perhaps the bakehouse received one; if not, water buckets were probably employed.¹⁶⁵ Filled water barrels stood ready by each building;¹⁶⁶

¹⁵⁹Commissary Inventory, December 31, 1871, in Miscellaneous manuscripts, FOLA.

¹⁶⁰*Outline Description of U. S. Military Posts*, p. 221; *Outline Descriptions of the Posts in the Military Division of the Missouri*, p. 97.

¹⁶¹"Inspection report of Fort Laramie, Sept. 1, 1881," in the Research Files, FOLA; Spring, *Caspar Collins*, p. 145.

¹⁶²Hafen and Young, *Fort Laramie*, p. 387.

¹⁶³*Ibid.*, p. 403; *Outline Description of U. S. Military Posts*, p. 221; *Outline Descriptions of the Posts in the Military Division of the Missouri*, p. 97.

¹⁶⁴Hafen and Young, *Fort Laramie*, p. 403; "Medical History," Section One. A more elaborate system developed in the 1880s, consisting of "water drawn from a well by a steam pump, . . . stored in a tank and distributed through iron pipes." "Medical History," December, 1884.

¹⁶⁵"Report of the Quartermaster-General," October 19, 1871, in *Report of the Secretary of War, 1871* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1871), p. 210; Commanding Officer, Colonel John E. Smith, to Assistant Adjutant General, Department of the Platte, April 19, 1872, Fort Laramie, Letters Sent, in the Research Files, FOLA. Colonel Smith requisitioned nine more Babcock extinguishers, so "that there may be one in each set of Company quarters, in each storehouse, and Stable at the Post. . . ." *Ibid.*

in the winter months they were removed inside to prevent their freezing.¹⁶⁷ Each building also received one or more axes for emergency purposes.¹⁶⁸ Such items were standard throughout the 1870s and 1880s at Fort Laramie. By the time of the post's deactivation, however, piped-in water and hydrants somewhat improved protection against fire.¹⁶⁹

If the bakehouse functioned as a properly managed concern, and if the bakers fulfilled their jobs expeditiously, the soldiers benefited. If not, either through inefficient bakers, incompetent management, or both—to say nothing of the quality of available flour—the garrison suffered, sometimes badly. Because of its produce, the post bakery assumed immediate significance. Management thus geared locally to guard against deficiencies that might frustrate the troops in completing their mission. In this respect, the bakery complex represented a fundamental element of military readiness too important to be ignored by western army commands.

At Fort Laramie the bakeries functioned continuously through the years, sometimes inadequately, but nonetheless faithfully preparing the bread ration allowed the soldiers by law. While bread production constituted its fundamental service, the bakery also contributed substantially to the Post Fund through the sale of loaves made from saving on flour, and thus comprised a lucrative asset to the garrison's financial status. Army bakeries consequently discharged important services the soldiers could not do without.

See also Smith to Assistant Adjutant General, Department of the Platte, May 8, 1872, Fort Laramie, Letters Sent, in the Research Files, FOLA.

¹⁶⁶Hafen and Young, *Fort Laramie*, p. 404.

¹⁶⁷Directive of the Commanding Officer, December 10, 1879, Fort Laramie, Letters Sent, in the Research Files, FOLA.

¹⁶⁸Directive of the Commanding Officer, October 5, 1874, Fort Laramie, Letters Sent, in the Research Files, FOLA.

¹⁶⁹Hafen and Young, *Fort Laramie*, p. 389; Inspection report, July 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8, 1889, in the Research Files, FOLA.

Minutes of a Council held at Fort Pierre, N.T. . . . by Brevet Brigadier General William S. Harney, U. S. Army, Commanding the Sioux Expedition, with the delegations from nine of the Bands of the Sioux. Fourth Day, March 4, 1856.

"The man that is struck by the Ree" Yancton Chief - Spoke through Zephyr Recontre interpreter as follows: -

.

You pick out the poorest man you have and send him up here to give us our goods - When an Agent comes here he is poor - but he gets rich - he goes away and another poor one comes -

Thomas S. Twiss, Indian Agent, Upper Platte to the Honorable, The Commissioner of Indian Affairs. Dat(ed) Camp of the Indian Agency, Raw Hide Creek, 25 miles north of Fort Laramie, Novr 7th 1856.

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The office of Indian Agent is no sinecure, if the incumbent discharges his duty with faithfulness towards the Tribes committed to his care. He must not expect, nor calculate upon, a carpeted Drawing Room & his office for the transaction of public business, nor Servants to wait upon him, & run at every call. These things, & almost every thing else to be met with in civilized life are unknown in the Indian Country. He must not, if he is resolved to discharge a tithe of his duties, dwell in any fixed abode. The Tribes, in their usual hunting grounds, may be one or two hundred miles distant from a permanently established Agency, & it would be an act of cruelty to call the Chiefs & principal men to a council, thus leaving their families unprovided with subsistence, during the time of a long journey going to & returning from the Indian agency. The clear & obvious duty of the Indian Agent is to establish the Indian Agency in a travelling ambulance, & to move it from Band to Band, & from tribe to tribe, as circumstances & the exigencies of the moment demand. It is much easier for him to do this than it is for a large party of Indians.

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The material used as filler in this issue of *Annals of Wyoming*, as well as the issues for Fall, 1974, and Spring, 1975, is from *Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Selected Documents Concerning the Administration of Indian Affairs at the Upper Platte Agency*, Record Group 75. It has been provided by Dr. Robert L. Munkres, Department of Political Science, Muskingum College, New Concord, Ohio.

The Early Exploration of Cheyenne Pass

By

ROBERT J. WHITAKER

South Pass was discovered by Robert Stuart and his band of Astorians in 1812 as they returned from the mouth of the Columbia River.¹ This easy passage through the Rocky Mountains was firmly established in 1832 when Captain Benjamin Bonneville led the first wagon trains through the pass. From this time on countless thousands would follow this route as they trailed their way to Utah, California, and the Pacific Northwest.² In the third quarter of the century, however, the Union Pacific Railroad built along the Overland Trail, an alternate route to the West. The railroad and the establishment of the city of Cheyenne would open southeastern Wyoming for settlement. Before and after the building of the railroad a number of explorers and surveyors crossed and re-crossed this part of the state. This paper will discuss some of this exploration and its influence.)

Among the agencies most instrumental in the exploration and surveying of the West in the 19th century was the Army Corps of Topographical Engineers. The Topographical Corps was created as a department separate from the Corps of Engineers by an act of Congress on July 5, 1838, and was eventually re-merged with the Corps of Engineers on March 3, 1863. During this period the Corps provided a vast volume of scientific and cartographic information on the West.³

At the same time the Corps of Engineers was also active in constructing military roads through the western territories. These roads were built, ostensibly, to provide military protection for travelers and settlers, but they also served to expand the routes

¹See, for example, William H. Goetzmann, *Exploration and Empire* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1966), pp. 19-23; 33-34. The map on page 23 shows the routes of the earliest explorers through the Rocky Mountain regions.

²*Ibid.*, pp. 148-152.

³William H. Goetzmann, *Army Exploration in the American West, 1803-1863*, Yale Publications in American Studies, No. 4 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1959), pp. 4-6; 432. Goetzmann provides a thorough examination of the Army Corps of Topographical Engineers in the exploration of the West.)

available to these migrants and to connect permanent settlements. In addition, the activities of the army provided information necessary for the eventual construction of a railroad to the Pacific.⁴

Fort Laramie was built as a trading post on the North Platte River, near the mouth of the Laramie River, in 1834 and was purchased by the U. S. government in 1849. For many years thereafter it served as an important army post as well as a supply depot for emigrant trains.⁵

Several miles west of Fort Laramie, Chugwater Creek flows into the Laramie River. The Chugwater has its origins some miles to the south and flows northward through a long valley. South of the headwaters of the Chugwater, the valley continues as far south as Crow Creek. It is bounded on the west by the Laramie Range, known in the early days as the Black Hills.⁶ A low plateau, several miles to the east, forms the eastern boundary. This valley is known as Cheyenne Pass. Lying south of the main route of travel across Wyoming, Cheyenne Pass was explored much later than other areas which lay directly along the emigrant roads. It did receive increasing attention, however, as explorers searched for alternate routes through the mountains toward the west.

It would be impossible to identify the first white man to visit Cheyenne Pass. Undoubtedly some of the early mountain men passed through at various times. Among the first documented expeditions near Cheyenne Pass was John Charles Fremont's first expedition in 1842. On July 12 Fremont left St. Vrain's Fort in Colorado for Fort Laramie. His route took him northward, close to the present site of Cheyenne. Fremont notes in his journal that his party crossed Crow, Lodgepole, Horse, and Chugwater Creeks. His account and the map drawn by his topographer, Charles Preuss, indicate that he probably traveled over the plains east of Cheyenne Pass and, at most, viewed it from a distance.⁷

In the summer of 1845 Stephen Watts Kearny conducted a

⁴W. Turrentine Jackson, *Wagon Roads West* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1952), pp. 320-328. Jackson concentrates on the various federal programs and policies that influenced transportation development to the West.

⁵Robert W. Frazer, *Forts of the West* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1965), pp. 181-182.

⁶Not to be confused with the Black Hills of South Dakota. The Laramie Range was known as the Black Hills as late as 1875. This term will be used in this context throughout this paper. See, for example, the map in J. H. Triggs, *History of Cheyenne and Northern Wyoming* (Omaha: Herald Steam Book and Job Printing House, 1876; Facsimile Copy, Laramie, Wyoming: Powder River Publishers & Booksellers, 1955).

⁷Donald Jackson and Mary Lee Spence, eds., *The Expeditions of John Charles Fremont*, Vol. 1: *Travels from 1838 to 1844* (Urbana, Chicago and London: University of Illinois Press, 1970), pp. 206-210. Fremont's map is also reproduced in Goetzmann, *Army Exploration*, and is included in the cover pocket.)

rapid survey of the plains country, traveling from Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, to Fort Laramie and South Pass. At South Pass Kearny turned back to Fort Laramie. Leaving there on July 13, he led his expedition southward along Chugwater Creek. He continued southward to St. Vrain's and Bent's forts, following a route close to that of Fremont in 1842. The map of the expedition, prepared by his topographer, Lieutenant W. B. Franklin, was based on Fremont's map and indicates that Kearny's route was probably twenty to thirty miles east of Cheyenne Pass.⁸

(The first major survey of Cheyenne Pass seems to have been that of Captain Howard Stansbury of the Army Corps of Topographical Engineers. In the spring of 1849 Stansbury was directed to make an extensive survey of the valley of the Great Salt Lake. Guided by Jim Bridger, he completed his mission by the end of the summer of 1850 and began his trip back toward Fort Leavenworth. On his return journey he set out to find another route through the Rocky Mountains south of the well-traveled South Pass.⁹

On September 26 Stansbury's party entered the Laramie Plains near the Laramie River. The following day they sighted vast herds of buffalo and encountered large bands of Oglala Sioux Indians. The Indians were curious and peaceful, and friendly visits were exchanged between the army party and the Sioux. On September 28 the expedition continued eastward to the western slopes of the Black Hills, coming to the head of Lodgepole Creek near the summit. Following down a ridge in a S. S. E. direction to avoid the steep, wooded canyon, the party camped on a branch of Crow Creek about six miles from the summit.)

(The following day the party continued eastward and descended the eastern slope of the Black Hills, camping on another branch of Crow Creek. On September 30 Stansbury turned toward the north and followed along the base of the Black Hills.¹⁰ Stansbury's description of the terrain is of interest.

On our right, about two miles distant, stretched a high table ridge, or plateau, rising one hundred and fifty or two hundred feet, its western escarpments abrupt, nearly vertical, and capped in this vicinity by argillaceous limestone and sandstones, with occasional strata of pudding-stone. Between this plateau on our right and the Black Hills on our left, there is a marked depression or valley, averaging about four miles in width, and which appears to have been cut out by the violent

⁸House Executive Document 2 (Serial 480), 29th Cong., 1st Session, 1845, pp. 210-217. Franklin's map is reproduced here and follows p. 210.

⁹Jackson, *Wagon Roads West*, pp. 29-34. Stansbury's route is shown on the map on p. 30.

¹⁰Capt. Howard Stansbury, *Exploration and Survey of the Valley of the Great Salt Lake of Utah, Including a Reconnaissance of a New Route through the Rocky Mountains* (Philadelphia: Lippincott, Grambo & Co., 1852); Senate Executive Document 3 (Serial 608), 32d Cong., Special Session, March, 1851, pp. 251-259.

action of an immense body of water flowing in a northern direction. The valley extends along the base of the Black Hills, from where we first descended their eastern slope, to the Chugwater; . . . The depression thus formed is called the "Cheyenne Pass," from the constant use made of it by that tribe in their migrations to and from the Platte. From the red canon of Crow Creek to some distance down the Chugwater, a range of lower hills, apparently of lime and sandstone of different colours and qualities, occurs, flanking and following the general direction of the main back-bone of the Black Hills. Through these, the numerous streams which take their rise in the ridge beyond have forced a passage in deep, narrow, and rugged canons, and, after crossing the Cheyenne Pass, have broken through the marly plateau on our right, in their passage through plains to the eastward into the North and South Forks of the Platte.¹¹)

About fourteen miles north of Crow Creek, Stansbury camped on a branch of Lodgepole Creek. Planning on following this stream to its confluence with the South Platte, he sent an express to Fort Laramie for additional food.¹² While waiting for its return, his party explored further northward, crossing the branches of Horse Creek and on to the valley of the Chugwater. This valley, Stansbury noted, was a favorite wintering place for the Cheyenne Indians. On the hill sides and in the bed of Chugwater Creek Stansbury discovered ". . . immense numbers of rounded black nodules of magnetic iron-ore, which seemed of unusual richness."¹³ On October 6 Stansbury suffered a fall while camped on the Chugwater and had to send to Fort Laramie for an ambulance. His injury terminated any further exploration. Stansbury arrived at Fort Laramie on October 12 and immediately left for Fort Leavenworth, where he arrived on November 6. A month later he reported back to his superior in Washington.¹⁴

(Stansbury's exploration of Cheyenne Pass had established the possibility of a more direct passage through the Rocky Mountains than the South Pass route. Stansbury emphasized that the old route to Fort Bridger, by way of Fort Laramie and South Pass, would be reduced nearly sixty miles by following Lodgepole Creek from its junction with the South Platte. The route through the Black Hills to the Laramie Plains, he observed, was ". . . not only practicable, but free from any obstructions involving in their removal great or unusual expenditure."¹⁵)

(Stansbury's report would play a role in a much larger undertaking—the survey for a transcontinental railway. For several

¹¹*Ibid.*, p. 260.

¹²*Ibid.*

¹³*Ibid.*, p. 266.

¹⁴*Ibid.*, pp. 266-267.

¹⁵*Ibid.*, p. 262. The map of Stansbury's expedition is reproduced in Carl I. Wheat, *Mapping the Transmississippi West: 1540-1861*, Vol. 3: *From The Mexican War to the Boundary Surveys: 1846-1854* (San Francisco: The Institute of Historical Cartography, 1959), between pp. 118-119.

years Congress had debated the merits of various routes. Much of this debate centered around the economic and political advantages to those regions through which the railroad would pass. It still remained to select the route which would be the most feasible economically. Finally on March 2, 1853, Congress passed a bill which directed Secretary of War Jefferson Davis to present a full report to Congress of all practical routes based on field surveys. It was hoped that this report would provide firm data to resolve the question of the best route.¹⁶

(Among the several routes under consideration was the one near the forty-first and forty-second parallels. This region included the well-known route through South Pass as well as the route across Cheyenne Pass and through the Black Hills that had been explored by Stansbury. The summary report of the surveys was prepared by Captain A. A. Humphreys and Lieutenant G. K. Warren of the Army Topographical Corps. Humphreys and Warren noted that the Cheyenne Pass route was less well known, and that Lodgepole Creek had not been continuously explored. One wonders why this exploration was not ordered in view of Stansbury's enthusiastic report, which was the basis of their summary. This was not done, however, and the South Pass route received recommendation over the Cheyenne Pass from Humphreys and Warren.¹⁷ In the end, the surveys did not resolve the question of the best route or routes for a railroad, and the actual location and construction of the railroad would still be some years in the future.)

(The idea of using Cheyenne Pass as a westward route was not entirely abandoned, however. On June 21, 1856, Lt. Francis T. Bryan of the Topographical Corps left Fort Riley to survey two possible wagon road routes from Fort Riley to Bridger's Pass. Leaving the valley of the Platte and following Lodgepole Creek from its junction with the Platte, Bryan's party arrived at Pine Bluffs on July 28. All along his route he had found the terrain excellent for a road; the ground was hard and the streams could be forded with little difficulty. At Pine Bluffs Bryan cut a supply of pine to use for fuel until they reached the Black Hills. Enough was cut ". . . for several days use—buffalo chips, which have answered heretofore, being scarce."¹⁸)

¹⁶Goetzmann, *Army Exploration*, p. 274. Goetzmann provides a full summary of the Pacific Railroad surveys on pp. 262-304.

¹⁷Capt. A. A. Humphreys and Lieut. G. K. Warren, "An Examination by the Direction of the Hon. Jefferson Davis, Secretary of War, of the Reports of Explorations for Railroad Routes . . .," in "Reports of Explorations and Surveys to Ascertain the Most Practicable and Economical Route for a Railroad from the Mississippi River to the Pacific Ocean," Senate Executive Document 78, I (Serial 758), 33d Cong., 2d Session, 1854-55, p. 57.

¹⁸House Executive Document 2 (Serial 943), 35th Cong., 1st Session, 1857-58, pp. 455-458.

(By August 1 Bryan reached the foot of the Black Hills where his party camped between the two forks of Lodgepole Creek. Here Bryan found wide bottoms, with plenty of grass for their animals, in contrast to the rather barren terrain over which they had been passing. While ample water was found in the creek, they often encountered intervals several miles in length where the stream had sunk below ground. In these places water was usually available by digging in the creek bed.)

(The following day Bryan's party began the ascent into the Black Hills between the forks of Lodgepole Creek. While the climb was steep in places, the wagon teams experienced no serious difficulty; the ground was hard and smooth, for the most part, and progress was even. That night they camped just short of the summit. Across from their camp, Bryan noted,

. . . the mountain was thickly covered with straight young pines, affording lodge poles to various bands of Indians who resort to this point to supply themselves. From this circumstance the creek derives its name. Our route to-day lay for the most part along an Indian trail, information of which was obtained from Eagle Head, an Arapahoe.¹⁹)

The next day Bryan's party entered the Laramie Plains. He continued on to the Medicine Bow Mountains looking for Bridger's Pass. This Bryan failed to find. He did, however, find another pass (Bryan's Pass) which he explored and then turned back east. At Medicine Bow Butte Bryan turned south to survey the second possible route. Following the Cache la Poudre River to the South Platte, and from there south to the Republican River, Bryan arrived back at Fort Riley on October 24.²⁰ His final report recommended his outward route for construction of the wagon road. The primary objection to this route was the great shortage of fuel, except buffalo chips, between Fort Kearney and Pine Bluffs. This would pose a particular hardship during the winter months. In addition, Bryan notes, "The absence of timber and the inapplicability of the soil to purposes of agriculture, prevent the establishment of posts and the settlement of the country along the Platte."²¹ Whatever its other accomplishments, Bryan's expedition did fill the critical gap in the exploration of Lodgepole Creek that was lacking in the railroad survey report.

(During the spring and summer of 1857 Bryan returned to direct minor improvements of the wagon road. Along Lodgepole Creek stream crossings were graded and obstacles were removed from the

¹⁹*Ibid.*, p. 459.

²⁰*Ibid.*, pp. 459-478, *passim*, Bryan uses the term "Medicine-Bon" Butte in his narrative.

²¹*Ibid.*, p. 478. See also, Jackson, *Wagon Roads West*, p. 122 for a map of Bryan's route.

road. The improvements, while minimal, were adequate to allow the passage of single wagons under normal conditions.²²)

(In 1858 Bryan conducted another reconnaissance of his 1856 route along Lodgepole Creek. On June 18 his party camped at Pine Bluffs and four days later entered Cheyenne Pass. Bryan observed that, although grass and water were far more abundant than they had been in 1856, fuel shortage was still a problem over several portions of their route. The following day the party ascended to the summit of the Black Hills and camped. From here Bryan continued on to Bridger's Pass, where he arrived on July 8, and filed his report with Lt. Col. George Andrews, commander of the First Column Utah Army, 6th Infantry.²³)

Colonel Andrews forwarded Bryan's report to the army adjutant general in Washington. Andrews was not as optimistic as Bryan about the use of the wagon road. He noted in his cover letter that, while the road was passable for wagons, the scarcity of grass removed the advantage of being a shorter route. He recommended continued use of the Fort Laramie route.²⁴

(The possibility of using of Cheyenne Pass as a wagon route was not abandoned, however. In the fall of 1858 Brevet Major Thomas Williams was sent to establish a post to assure the safety of wagon trains using the Cheyenne Pass road. On September 9, 1858, Williams, commanding Companies L and M, 4th United States Artillery, and escorted by a detachment from Company D 2d Dragoons, left Fort Laramie. In addition, a supply train and a herd of forty cattle accompanied Williams and his command. Following close to Stansbury's route down Chugwater Creek, the party arrived at Lodgepole Creek on September 19. After a two day reconnaissance of the area, Williams selected the site for a camp which he named Camp Walbach. Through the fall and winter the party labored, gathering sandstone slabs and timbers to improve their quarters. By the time Camp Walbach was permanently abandoned by the army on April 19, 1859, relatively permanent structures had been built.²⁵ While the isolated post's mission was brief, the map of the route from Fort Laramie through Cheyenne Pass to Camp Walbach was probably the most detailed map of the region to that date, and, most likely, was the only lasting contribution of Camp Walbach.²⁶)

²²Jackson, *Wagon Roads West*, p. 130.

²³House Executive Document 2 (Serial 998), 35th Cong., 2d Session, 1858-59, pp. 207-212.

²⁴*Ibid.*, pp. 206-207.

²⁵Garry David Ryan, "Camp Walbach, Nebraska Territory, 1858-1859: The Military Post at Cheyenne Pass," *Annals of Wyoming*, April, 1963, pp. 5-20, *passim*.

²⁶"Sketch of Bvt. Major Williams' Route from Fort Laramie to Cheyenne Pass, under orders to establish a post. September, 1858," National Archives

In the summer of 1859 journalist Horace Greeley undertook a trip from New York to San Francisco. Leaving Denver for Fort Laramie on June 21, he arrived at Cheyenne Pass and the recently abandoned site of Camp Walbach several days later.²⁷ Greeley was critical of the establishment of the Camp. "It last year entered the head of some genius connected with the War Department that the public interest or safety required the establishment of a military post at this point, and one was accordingly planted and maintained there throughout last winter."²⁸ He continued:

In the spring, the troops were very properly withdrawn, leaving half a dozen good serviceable houses and a superior horse shed and corral untenanted. Hereupon, three lazy louts have squatted on the premises, intending to start a city there, and to hold and sell the government structures under a claim of pre-emption! I need hardly say that, in the absence of any United States survey, with the Indian title still unextinguished, this claim is most impudent; but that will not prevent their asserting it, and I fear with success. . . . if they are only tenacious enough, impudent enough, they will probably carry their point. Yet they might as fairly pre-empt the White House at Washington, should they ever chance to find it vacant.²⁹

Greeley (or history) does not record the names of these squatters or the degree of success of their enterprise. It is doubtful, however, that their occupancy was long lived.

(The Civil War and the dissolution of the Corps of Topographical Engineers in 1863 brought the army's western exploration to a standstill. Other forces were at work, however, that would permanently change the face of the Rocky Mountain West. Among these was the construction of the Union Pacific Railroad.)

The reports of the railroad surveys of 1853 merely added more fuel to the already heated debate as to the best route for a railroad. As a result, no route had been selected by the time of the Civil War. The war, however, removed the possible southern routes

and Records Service, Cartographic Archives Division, Records of the Chief of Engineers, Record Group 77 (Rds. 165). The map was prepared from sketches of the post's Assistant Surgeon, Ebenezer Swift. A copy is on file at the Wyoming State Archives and Historical Department.

(The use of the term "Cheyenne Pass" is not consistently applied. While it is clear from Stansbury's description that he referred to the long valley from Crow Creek to Chugwater Creek (and the term is used in this sense throughout this paper), later use seems to restrict the term to the passage along Lodgepole Creek through the Black Hills to the Laramie Plains followed by Bryan's road. It is indicated in this latter sense on the modern map of the area by the U. S. Geological Survey (Islay Quadrangle, Wyoming-Laramie Co., United States Department of the Interior, Geological Survey, 1962).)

²⁷Horace Greeley, *An Overland Journey from New York to San Francisco in the Summer of 1859*, ed. by Charles T. Duncan (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1964), p. 140.

²⁸*Ibid.*, p. 150.

²⁹*Ibid.*, pp. 150-151.

from consideration, and removed southern opposition to any northern route. The growing population of California added further political pressure for the construction of a railroad.³⁰

On June 28, 1861, the Central Pacific Railroad Company was organized at Sacramento to build a railroad to the east. The following year Congress passed the enabling legislation for the construction of a railroad, which was signed into law by President Abraham Lincoln on July 1, 1862. The Pacific Railroad Act specified that the railroad would be built from each end and meet at a yet undetermined location. On January 8, 1863, the Central Pacific broke ground in Sacramento, and the newly formed Union Pacific Railroad and Telegraph Company broke ground in Omaha on December 2 of the same year. The exact route the railroad was to take still had to be surveyed in detail.³¹

(During 1864 surveying parties were in the field. The surveys eliminated consideration of a possible route through the rugged mountains west of Denver. The route along Lodgepole Creek through Cheyenne Pass was surveyed in more detail, indicating that a 1500-foot tunnel through the Black Hills would be required to reach the summit. The surveyors sent out in 1865 were instructed to attempt to find a better route through the Black Hills and to re-survey the South Pass route.³² Their field work provided considerable data on several possible routes through the Black Hills. Among the ten routes thus surveyed, two through Cheyenne Pass, near the former site of Camp Walbach, were considered. The first was the direct route mentioned above. The second would turn south at Camp Walbach, following the eastern base of the Black Hills, and pass over the mountains along the ridge dividing Crow Creek and Lone Tree Creek.³³)

(The passage between Crow Creek and Lone Tree Creek was re-discovered by General Grenville Dodge during the summer of 1865. The following summer Dodge sent James Evans, division engineer, back for a further survey of the pass. Evans had previously surveyed the pass, which bears his name, but apparently missed its importance. Evans' second survey verified the value of this route through the Black Hills.³⁴ The advantages of this new

³⁰See, for example, Goetzmann, *Exploration and Empire*, p. 293.

³¹Wesley S. Griswald, *A Work of Giants* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company Inc., 1962), pp. 14-20; 58-59.

³²Senate Executive Document 69 (Serial 2336), 47th Cong., 1st Session, 1886-87, p. 6.

³³*Ibid.*, pp. 14-16. A summary of each of the ten possible routes is given on pp. 18-25.

³⁴A re-evaluation of Dodge's discovery of Evans' Pass is given by Wallace D. Farnham, "Grenville Dodge and the Union Pacific: A Study of Historical Legends," *The Journal of American History*, March, 1965, pp. 638-640.

route were obvious to the railroad directors, and it received their recommendations. The railroad left the valley of Lodgepole Creek in western Nebraska and headed due west. By August, 1867 the directors could report that the town of Cheyenne had been laid out on Crow Creek, and lots were being sold.³⁵ By mid-November the tracks had been laid to Cheyenne.

(While the Union Pacific had barely missed going through Cheyenne Pass, exploration had not stopped. Much of the activity, if not the mission, of the Army Topographical Corps was taken over by the Interior Department. Among the first to capitalize on this change was Ferdinand V. Hayden. Educated as a physician, Hayden soon became fascinated with geology and had explored the Dakota Badlands in search of fossils in 1853. He also had served as a geologist with several army exploring parties before the Civil War. In 1867 he conducted a geological survey of Nebraska under the auspices of the General Land Office. This was the first of a series of surveys known as the "United States Geological Survey of the Territories."³⁶

(The following year Hayden extended his survey into Wyoming. On August 15 Hayden and his party left Cheyenne to explore further the Chugwater Valley to its head. That night they camped on Horse Creek. Hayden observed: "This valley can hardly be surpassed for grazing purposes. The valley is excellent and the grass is good. Near the point where the creek issues from the foot-hills of the Laramie range, there is a series of upheaved ridges, with a strike nearly east and west, the beds inclining from 50° to 70°."³⁷

The iron deposits along the Chugwater, discovered by Stansbury in 1850, were surveyed. Hayden noted that the amount of iron ore was indefinite in extent. This was the second time Hayden had observed these deposits. While attached to Captain W. F. Reynolds' expedition to the Yellowstone (the last expedition of the Topographical Corps) in 1859-60, Hayden had visited the valley of the Chugwater and had observed and collected a number of the nodules of iron ore scattered on the surface of the ground.³⁸

(In 1869 Hayden again traversed the length of Cheyenne Pass, following close to the edge of the western mountains. Along the way he made notes of the terrain and the geological formations

³⁵Senate Executive Document 69 (Serial 2336), p. 35.

³⁶Goetzmann, *Exploration and Empire*, pp. 489-496.

³⁷F. V. Hayden, "Second Annual Report of the United States Geological Survey of the Territories, Embracing Wyoming" (1868) in *First, Second, and Third Annual Reports of the United States Geological Survey of the Territories for the Years 1867, 1868, and 1869* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1873), p. 80.

³⁸*Ibid.*, pp. 79-81.

which he observed.) In his report he offers the following explanation for the geological formation of the valley:

An interesting question arises as to the manner in which these parallel valleys have been scooped out. That it must have occurred after the deposition of the latest tertiary beds [about 30 million years ago] is evident, from the fact that the streams which form the outlets have cut their way through them . . . the mountains formed the western shore of the great fresh-water lakes of the middle and upper tertiary periods. As the mountains were slowly elevated, so that the waters receded, there was a depression at the immediate base of the mountains, of greater or less depth, that received the drainage. The water-course would be gradually formed for the principal streams and their branches. The waters in the parallel valleys formed a sort of lake-like expansion of the little streams, and the waters of the lake performed their work of erosion at the same time that the streams wore their channels through the plains. It is probable that since the close of the tertiary period, and the commencement of the present era, the climate of the west has been much colder; that ice and snow accumulated on the mountain ranges in vast quantities; and that the quantity of water to produce the results which we find indicated by erosion and in the drift was far greater than at present. It may be that ice was not the most important agency, and though the evidence is clear that it performed an active part, yet water was the principal agent, and the present existence of an occasional moderate-sized boulder in the plains, too large to be transported by water alone, indicates that an iceberg was now and then drifted out on the waters to the plains.³⁹

A second and more detailed geological survey of this region was made by Clarence King's party in 1871. In 1867 King received authorization and funds from the Army to conduct a detailed survey along the 40th parallel. The survey was bounded by the 120th and 105th meridians, approximately 100 miles wide along the 40th parallel, and included the route of the Union Pacific. King was directed to make a detailed exploration of the geology, botany, and zoology of the region.⁴⁰ Beginning in the west, King's exploration moved eastward. By 1871-1872 the eastern foothills of the Rockies were surveyed, including Cheyenne Pass.⁴¹ While his field work was completed in 1872, his *Report of the Geological Exploration of the Fortieth Parallel* was not published until 1878 to 1880. It eventually reached seven large volumes by different authors plus an atlas.⁴² Unlike Hayden's reports, which are a day-to-day journal of his exploration, King's report is a carefully organized, scientific account of his findings. The second volume,

³⁹F. V. Hayden, [Fourth Annual Report] *Preliminary Report of the United States Geological Survey of Wyoming and Portions of Contiguous Territories* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1872), p. 13.

⁴⁰Richard A. Bartlett, *Great Surveys of the American West* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1962), pp. 144-146.

⁴¹*Ibid.*, pp. 182-183.

⁴²*Ibid.*, pp. 207-211.

written by Arnold Hague and S. F. Emmons, provides a thorough description of the geology of the Cheyenne Pass. Chemical analyses of the limestone near Horse Creek and the iron deposits along the Chugwater are also provided.⁴³

With the completion of King's expedition, continued survey of Wyoming took on more routine proportions. The creation of Wyoming Territory on July 25, 1868, brought with it the General Land Office which was organized for the new territory by the act of Congress of June 30, 1870.⁴⁴ Under the surveyor general of Wyoming detailed surveys of the territory were begun.

(The early reports of Silas Reed, first surveyor general, to the commissioner of the General Land Office provide a wealth of information on the rapid growth of Wyoming Territory, as well as listings of the survey progress. Throughout his annual reports Reed speaks glowingly of the industrial potential of Wyoming. The close proximity of Cheyenne and the Union Pacific opened the ideal grazing lands of southeastern Wyoming to ranchers and farmers. By 1871 Reed could report a number of owners were grazing nearly 37,000 head of cattle along Crow, Lodgepole, Horse, and Chugwater Creeks.⁴⁵ The following year he notes: ". . . I have extended the township and subdivisional work northward . . . in order to accommodate the stock growers, who are settling in the valleys of Horse, Bear, Chug, Richard, and Sybylle Creeks, as far north as the Laramie River, and prefer to locate near the mountain, where wood and water most abound."⁴⁶ And in 1873 he states that ranches and large herds are to be found throughout this region.⁴⁷)

⁴³Arnold Hague and S. F. Emmons, *Descriptive Geology*, Vol. II of *Report the Geological Exploration of the Fortieth Parallel*, Professional Papers of the Engineer Department, U. S. Army, No. 18 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1877), pp. 2-72, *passim*.

⁴⁴U. S., Department of Interior, General Land Office, *Annual Report of the Commissioner of the General Land Office Made to the Secretary of the Interior for the Year 1870* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1872), pp. 1; 124.

⁴⁵House Executive Document 1, Part 5 (Serial 1505), 42d Cong., 2d Session, 1871, p. 295. Reed's figures indicate the difficulty in estimating actual herd sizes. An assessed number of 5361 head for all of Laramie County is given for the same year by William J. Switzler, *Report on the Internal Commerce of the United States for the Fiscal Year 1889* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1889), p. 834.

⁴⁶U. S. Department of Interior, General Land Office, *Report of the Commissioner of the General Land Office to the Secretary of the Interior for the year 1872* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1872), p. 251.

⁴⁷U. S. Department of Interior, General Land Office, *Report of the Commissioner of the General Land Office to the Secretary of the Interior for the Year 1873* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1873), p. 247.

The iron deposits at Iron Mountain and along Chugwater Creek also received considerable attention. The proximity of this ore to Cheyenne and the Union Pacific led Reed to speculate on an iron industry developing in the territory. To transport the ore, he noted, "There is a good natural grade for a railroad from Cheyenne to the Iron Mountain, and it is hoped that one will be commenced before the close of another year."⁴⁸

Reed's optimism for an iron industry was slow to be realized. In 1897 and 1898 a few tons of ore were shipped to Pueblo, Colorado. Little more was done until the 1940s when the Union Pacific Railroad conducted an extensive geological exploration of the region.⁴⁹ Commercial extraction of ore commenced in the 1960s.

Mining of the vast limestone deposits at Horse Creek was begun in 1907 and continues to the present day by the Great Western Sugar Company.⁵⁰ Construction of the Cheyenne and Northern Railroad, connecting Cheyenne to the Northern Pacific Railroad was begun in 1886 and reached Horse Creek by December.⁵¹ The following year it was completed to Wendover.⁵²

(Thus the age of exploration of Cheyenne Pass had come to an end and the era of settlement had begun. By the early 1870s Cheyenne Pass had come under the sphere of influence of the business and industry of the city of Cheyenne. The herds of cattle that were turned out to graze in increasing numbers through the valley and along its streams were soon followed by ranchers who built permanent homes. The open range was eventually divided and fenced; ditches were dug to irrigate meadow lands; and the industries developed in the 1870s continue today.)

⁴⁸*Report of the General Land Office*, 1872, p. 261.

⁴⁹V. T. Dow, *Magnetite and Ilmenite Resources, Iron Mountain Area, Albany County, Wyo.* (U. S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Mines Information Circular 8037, 1961), pp. 4-8. The odd numbered sections of this region were part of the land grant to the Union Pacific in 1862.

⁵⁰*Minerals Yearbook*, 1953, Vol. III: *Area Reports* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1953), p. 1126.

⁵¹Henry V. Poor, *Manual of the Railroads of the United States for 1887* (New York: H. V. & H. W. Poor, 1887), p. 849.

⁵²A thorough account of the Cheyenne and Northern Railroad is given in E. O. Fuller, "Cheyenne Looking North," *Annals of Wyoming*, January, 1951, pp. 29-37. The Cheyenne and Northern became a part of the Colorado and Southern system in 1898. A number of photographs of train engines along portions of this route are used in James L. Ehernberger and Francis G. Gschwind, *Colorado & Southern: Northern Division* (Callaway, Nebr.: E. & G. Publications, 1966), pp. 52-64.

Supplement to a Selective Literary Bibliography of Wyoming

By

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Bibliographic Key

F.—fiction

P.—poetry

C.G.—combination genre

Freight and Stage Road from Rawlins to Red Lodge, Montana

FIRST SEGMENT OF TRAIL—RAWLINS TO LANDER

Trek No. 26 of the Historical Trail Treks

Compiled by Jane Houston

Sponsored by the Wyoming State Historical Society, the Wyoming State Archives and Historical Department, the Carbon County Chapter and the Fremont County Chapter, this Trek was under the direction of Henry Jensen, president of the Wyoming State Historical Society.

SATURDAY, JULY 12, 1975

7:30 p.m. the Carbon County Chapter was the host in Jeffrey Center for those trekkers leaving from Rawlins. Following a delightful get-together, the group saw slides of pictures taken by Professor John Jack of Harvard University in the Big Horn National Forest in 1900, and pictures taken of the same sites seventy-five years later by the Big Horn Forest Committee. In Lander the Fremont County Chapter entertained trekkers at the Fremont County Pioneer Museum.

SUNDAY, JULY 13, 1975

Trekkers boarded busses in Casper and Lander at 6:30 a.m. and in Rawlins at 7:30. The three busses met in Lamont.

THE RAWLINS - LANDER (FORT WASHAKIE) STAGE ROAD

by

Jeanne Lambertsen

(Not long after the birth of Rawlins the need for north-south transportation became very evident. A number of stage and freight lines resulted.) Among them was a stage line to Saratoga which headed south out of town, went around the point of Sheep Mountain and then headed for Saratoga. This route did not require any bridges across the Platte. It was owned by the Rendle Brothers, I. J. and Tom, and used Concord coaches and beautifully matched white horses. Another stage line went to Dillon during the copper boom, a third past Hogback Lake and south to Sulphur, and Baggs

and then to Meeker, Colorado. It was known as the White River Stage Line. North out of town was the Casper road which went down the Brown's Canyon Hill, across Separation Flats and through Sand Draw. (The other road which headed north was the Lander-Fort Washakie road which, of course, took a more westerly course.)

(The stage itself was a mountain wagon, at least in later years when Billy Collins was a driver.) It was boarded at the corner of Fifth and Cedar Streets where the Rankins had their livery stable. The road went up Fifth Street past the Court House where for many years there was a scaffold standing. It had been built to hang a cowboy by the name of Ben Carter, convicted of murder while riding in the Sweetwater country. The road then proceeded past the cemetery at the corner of Fifth and Maple. (There were two stages each day, one leaving Rawlins for Fort Washakie and one returning.) It took the stages thirty-six hours to complete the trip traveling both day and night. This was quite a contrast to the eight or ten days required by the freighters whose string teams moved at the weary pace of two or three miles an hour with many stops for feed and water.)

(Travelers on this road would meet many freight outfits with twelve to sixteen horses controlled by a "jerk line," pulling three or four wagons. Then there were the stages, ranchers with their supply wagons, buggies belonging to local residents, detachments of cavalry, Indians and often livestock being driven to town. Supplies were shipped from the government warehouse in Rawlins to the Arapahoes and Shoshonis on the reservation in the Lander area.)

It was customary for the Indians to come to Rawlins to pick up their allotments from the government and they would set up camp near the slaughter house which was on Sugar Creek east of town. There they would be given all the parts of the slaughtered animals that could not be sold and they made good use of all these discarded parts. Many of the local citizens found it advisable to keep their dogs indoors while the Indians were in town to prevent the family pet from winding up in an Indian stewpot.

Two miles north of Rawlins were the mines which produced "Rawlins Red" paint pigment. These mines were worked as recently as the '20s when H. Larsen was mining there. Union Pacific railroad cars and section houses were painted "Rawlins Red," as was the Brooklyn Bridge.

Seven miles from town is the Smith Ranch which was called Seven Mile Meadows in the early days. It was a handy place for freighters to stop and allow their horses to graze. These men had to take advantage of every watering place and of each meadow for grazing. The next watering places were Nine Mile Spring and the Fish Pond.

The first stage stop was Bell Springs located about fourteen

miles north of Rawlins. Some of the stage tenders there were Pete Taggart, Tom Tagner, Black Mike Sheehan, and Mr. and Mrs. Hays, who were there in 1883. Pete Taggart was quite a walker. He would walk from Bell Springs to Rawlins and back. He kept the stage road in shape by throwing rocks out of the road and doing minor repairs along the trail to town.

When Tom Tagner was the tender at Bell Springs he cached his money in a hideaway. Tom had absolutely no faith in banks. After his death various people searched for the cache. One man went so far as to get on Tagner's horse and, giving the horse his head, hoped it would go to the cache from habit but no one was ever successful in finding the money.

After leaving Bell Springs we dropped down into the Great Divide Basin, covering an area approximately seventy-five by twenty-five miles where there is no drainage to either the Pacific or Atlantic Oceans. Any moisture finding its way to this locality flows into lakes which lie within the Basin.

At the foot of Willow Hill a very straight road runs northwest from the present highway. This is the first piece of road that was surveyed within Carbon County. The surveyor was the late J. W. Wisda.

At approximately the spot where this road branches off from the highway there was once a road house and post office. It was built by a woman named McLaughlin and was called Lorey (Law ray'), being named for her daughter. The building was a very nice two-story log structure and both Kleber Hadsell, rancher, and Billy Collins, stage driver, said it was a fine place to eat or to rent a room for the night. For some reason it did not enjoy prosperity and lasted for only a very short time. Kleber said the "poet laureate of Separation Flats" offered this jingle to the memory of the place:

There was an old woman who lived at Lorey
She built a post office and thought it would pay.
She fed a tramp and cancelled a stamp
And that was the business for the day.

The log building was eventually moved to Rawlins and is a residence at 816 7th Street. It was stuccoed years ago.

The next stop was Separation Station, one of the last built on this route. According to Mr. Hadsell, "Separation" refers to the fact that this area was used for the roundup crews to gather and separate the cattle according to owners. There was room here to stable seventy-five head of horses and the only reason I can imagine for such accommodations would be that there were many cavalry outfits along this road. This station was built by the Hays family in 1897 who operated it for several years. The charge for a meal here was thirty-five cents.

Next was the Bull Springs Station. This was a road ranch owned and operated by Mr. and Mrs. A. M. House. This was the

most desolate setting imaginable. Mrs. House transplanted wild roses and tea vines around the house and the place took on a homey and attractive appearance.

Mrs. John Hirsch, daughter of the Houses, tells that the stages did not tarry long at the ranch. As they pulled into the yard the driver would throw the lines to the stock tender who was supposed to change the horses quickly. By the time the driver was washed and finished with his meal the stage was ready for the next lap of the journey. The prices at Bull Springs were fifty cents for a bed, fifty cents for a meal.

Mrs. House kept blankets to lend to greenhorn travelers who came unprepared for the rigors of Wyoming weather. The blankets would be returned by the next stage driver headed in the opposite direction. She also made it a practice to place lighted lamps in both the north and south windows of the house so that travelers along the road could be reassured by this comforting signal as they approached the ranch.

From here the road went past Iron Springs and Iron Springs Flat, another rest area for the freighters, then on to Lost Soldier Station.

At 8.6 miles past Lamont we stopped across the stream from the Lost Soldier Station and heard the following paper.

HOW LOST SOLDIER STATION GOT ITS NAME

by

Ruth Beebe

Dr. Thomas Magee wrote the following version of how Lost Soldier got its name to Colonel C. G. Coutant on May 21, 1893:

Dear Sir:

Tom Sun tells us that in 1880, William Daley and others selected a route from Rawlins to Lander. They were accompanied by some soldiers as guards, one of whom wandered away from the camp on what is now Lost Soldier Creek, and losing himself, wandered east to Tom Sun's ranch. The latch string was out but the soldier removed two panes of glass and unbuttoned the single sash and entered the cabin. He found victuals to supply his hunger and a place to sleep. From this came the name of Lost Soldier. Tom Sun says a man that hasn't got sense enough to go into a man's house by the door when it is left open would get lost anywhere!

Another version—I don't know how authentic—is that two soldiers got lost in that country and froze to death. Their bodies were buried near the station.

From Lamont to a point four miles past Lost Soldier Station we traveled in the Great Divide Basin which is not drained by any of the river systems. The Continental Divide splits south of Rawlins and does not come together again until in the area of the Oregon Buttes. At the edge of the Basin on a clear day the Oregon Buttes

can be seen in the distance, and beyond them and to the right, the Wind River Mountains. The haze was such that the trekkers were not treated to this view.

From the Great Divide Basin we entered the drainage of Crook's Creek, named for General George Crook, a renowned figure in the mountain region during the Indian Wars of the '60s and '70s. Crook's Creek drains into the Sweetwater and eventually into the Gulf of Mexico. Henry Jensen pointed out Green Mountain as we cruised along, and told us that at the edge of the timber, an Indian pole tepee or wikiup which had been known to local residents for seventy-five years, was discovered by B.L.M. personnel. In order to save it from vandals, they asked the Archaeological Department at the University of Wyoming to dismantle and store it. This structure has been carefully marked, and is now stored at the Museum of the Plains Indian at Cody. It may be returned to this area when suitable housing is available. It is thought that these structures were temporary shelters used by small war parties or hunters in inclement weather since they could be set up quickly where poles were plentiful. They were remarkably weatherproof, even in a blizzard.

There is another structure peculiar to Wyoming called an Indian rock alignment. One of these lies on a flat topped hill above Crook's Creek. This particular alignment is over a hundred feet in length and appears to be an arrow although some of the stones have been disturbed by a seismograph rig.

The three busses stopped at the Harris Station to hear the following paper.

HARRIS ROAD RANCH, CROOK'S GAP STATION AND BURNT RANCH STATION

by

Jean Lambertsen

From Lost Soldier the road turns to a more northerly direction again and passes Crook's Creek Station. Pete Taggart was tender at the Crook's Creek Station. He took up a homestead north of the station that is now known as Taggart Meadows.

The next stop was a road ranch. This was a popular stopping place owned and operated by Ed and Violet Harris. Their daughter Florence was telegraph operator and it was here that she met Johnny Kirk, stage driver, who later became her husband. These two built up a fine ranch on land that all the old timers had avoided, saying it was "poison" land.

In 1900 this ranch was run by Frank Sparrowhawk. He was quite a colorful character, attiring himself in clothing identical to that worn by Buffalo Bill Cody. He even had the shoulder-length wavy hair to complete the image. One day a company of black

cavalrymen stopped at the ranch. One of the men who seemed to want to give the appearance of being a tough customer ordered coffee and stipulated loudly that he wanted it "black as night, hot as hell and stirred with a pistol." Sparrowhawk didn't blink an eye. He calmly filled the cup, whipped out his six shooter, stirred the coffee with it and asked quietly, "Do you want some smoke in it?"

About two miles farther along the road we would pass the Della Fisher ranch or the Crook's Gap Stage Station. Della Fisher and her partner John Brown raised very fine cattle here. Later Con Sheehan owned the place. A saloon was operated here in early days.

Burnt Ranch Station was located where Burnt Gulch comes into Crook's Creek. Gib Stevens was telegrapher here. The telegraph line connected all stations with the exception of Bull Springs which was not one of the original stations. Ab Collins, father of the stage driver Billy Collins, was stage tender after Stevens. Both of these men were good fiddlers and they always played for the dances which were held along the Sweetwater.

The next stop was Rongis, site of a post office as well as a stage stop and road house. Here, one of the busses, being considerably heavier than the old-time stage coaches or freight wagons, mired down in the sand. When it became apparent that help would be needed to extricate the bus, the trekkers spread out their lunches and consumed them at Rongis rather than at the scheduled stop at the Sweetwater Crossing. Preceding lunch, Henry Jensen presented a short history of Rongis, a town founded by Ely and Johnny Signor. When Ely applied for a post office under his own last name but was refused, he spelled his name backwards, applied again, and the application for Rongis was accepted.

The actual stage station was about a mile up the Sweetwater River from Rongis. The town consisted of a blacksmith shop, livery stable, bar, hotel and commissary.

Jeanne Lambertsen related a story about Ely Signor, who was entertaining, on one occasion, some straight-laced callers. His daughter came running out of the house screaming, "Daddy, Daddy, the whiskey's boiling over."

One of the Oregon Trail's three crossings of the Sweetwater was near Rongis. About a mile from the town, Indians attacked a group of pioneers who were traveling the Trail. Piles of rocks still mark the graves of those who were killed in the encounter.

Rongis was abandoned about 1916 or 1917 and sage-covered foundations and dumps are all that remain.

After a wrecker and a power wagon together freed the stuck bus, the Trek proceeded on to Hailey post office and Station. As we passed Meyersville, Jeanne Lambertsen told us that Black Mike Sheehan was the stage tender at Meyersville. There were some cowboys along the Sweetwater who were noted for their mild

behavior. In fact, some of them were members of an outlaw outfit—a real wild bunch. Black Mike had experienced their brawls time after time and he wasn't too happy when the shooting would start. Finally he cut a hole in the floor behind the counter and from that hole a greased board led to the cellar. When the boys would start whooping it up and things seemed to be getting too rough Mike would hit the board and vanish in a split second to the dark safety of the cellar.

Sheehan apparently decided to find a more peaceful climate because he moved to Bell Springs. There he had quite a reputation for his spotless white dish towels which were prominently displayed. The unsuspecting public did not know that when he actually used a towel he reached behind the stove and brought forth a badly stained and grimy towel that hung there.

We also passed the Ice Slough which was famous on the Oregon Trail for the fact that under the heavy mat of dead vegetation, ice could be found by the emigrants—even in July. Twelve miles past the Sweetwater Crossing we came to Hailey at the foot of Beaver Rim on Beaver Creek. Beaver Creek was named by the early mountain men and there are references to it by that name in the 1820s.

HAILEY POST OFFICE AND STAGE STATION ON BEAVER CREEK

by

Henry Jensen

This is the site of the Hailey Stage Station. The barn which you see is the one which was built soon after the establishment of the station and it is still in use.

The founder and first agent at Hailey was Ora Hailey who worked for the Northwestern Mail and Transportation Company and was a prominent citizen in early day Fremont County.

Mr. Hailey's name is also remembered in connection with Hailey's Pass in the Wind Rivers which he used in 1903 to escape, with his sheep, from pursuing cattlemen when they threatened violence. Mr. Hailey was a senator in the first Wyoming legislature.

It should be pointed out that the station sites that we have seen were a relatively late development in the route we have been traveling. The general route we have been following was established in the late '60s when the Union Pacific reached Rawlins. The booming mining camps in the South Pass area were demanding all manner of supplies, as were residents of the Lander Valley, the Big Horn Basin, and southern Montana.

The freighters, who generally traveled in groups for protection, went by the shortest feasible route to their destination. They had

no stations and needed none. Most of the freighting was done with oxen and the freighters lived almost completely in the open, sleeping on the ground or in their wagons, and cooking over an open fire.

Early freighting operations were confined almost entirely to the spring, summer and fall since the mountain passes were blocked by snow in the winter. When the stage lines were started it was only logical that they follow the routes used by the freighters who had taken the shortest route consistent with the availability of water and forage.

After many pictures of the picturesque barn had been taken, the group boarded busses and started for the last stop of the day.

DERBY STOP

by

Henry Jensen

This is Derby. For the past several miles the road has followed Twin Creek which heads near Red Canyon south of Lander on the South Pass Highway. Derby was a stop on the stage road and, in all likelihood, for the freighters also when it came time to stop for the night.

The stone building which you see here, along with another which was destroyed when the new highway was constructed a few years ago, were built by the army to house soldiers stationed here to protect travelers from raiding parties of Indians in the '70s. According to the late James Moore, whose father was post sutler at Camp Brown, now Fort Washkaie, these contingents of soldiers were rotated every two weeks for several years when there was danger from Indians.

Derby Dome and Dallas Dome, northwest of here, were the sites of the earliest oil discoveries in Wyoming. The first producing oil well in Wyoming was drilled at Dallas Dome in 1884, with wells here soon after. Both fields are still producing oil.

It has been reported that General John C. Fremont visited oil springs which were in the area. This is the first reported visit by white men although it is almost certain that Fremont learned of the springs from some of his guides. The Indians had known and made medicinal use of the oil for many years.

Around 5:00 p.m. the three busses pulled into Lander and the trekkers spent an hour or so visiting the Fremont County Pioneer Museum. At 6:00 p.m. the Pythian Sisters served a delicious turkey dinner in the Lander Odd Fellows Hall. After dinner, trekkers who had come on the Casper and Rawlins busses re-boarded their busses for the return trip and Trek 26 came to an end. It had been a delightful and informative day spent in some of Wyoming's finest weather.

Book Reviews

Water and the West: The Colorado River Compact and the Politics of Water in the American West. By Norris Hundley, Jr. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975). Index. Bib. Illus. 395 pp. \$20.

Western historians generally recognize water's importance in the Trans-Mississippi West. Few, however, have examined the attempts to utilize and control western water supplies. Norris Hundley continues his investigation of the Colorado River in *Water and the West*. Studying the Colorado River Compact, events leading to its negotiation, and its legal and political repercussions, Hundley skillfully illustrates the complexity of western water politics.

The desires of the lower basin to develop the Colorado for immediate uses and the upper basin to protect its right to future uses produced a natural conflict in the basin. Delph Carpenter, favoring an interstate compact for resolving interstate conflicts as early as 1912, actively promoted the idea in 1920. Following this lead, representatives from the seven basin states and the federal government apportioned the Colorado River water between the upper and lower basins in 1922.

The compact did not secure all desired goals. The negotiators hoped to avoid lengthy litigation, to minimize the federal government's control of water resources, to place few restrictions on the upper basin, and to secure early development of the lower basin. None of these goals was fully achieved. Interpretation of the compact produced protracted court battles which led to unprecedented federal powers; new water-supply studies reduced the water available, severely restricting the upper states; and delayed ratification postponed lower basin development.

Despite these shortcomings, and disregard for Indian water rights, water quality, and Mexican irrigators' rights, Hundley views the document as a landmark in interstate water law. Never before had a compact been employed to divide a river for consumptive purposes. Never before had more than three states resolved their differences through negotiation. More importantly, the compact set an example followed in resolving conflicts on other western rivers. The compact also illustrates the role of federalism in water control. When states cannot construct reclamation projects, the federal government assists them. When the states cannot resolve their differences, the federal government helps guide them to compromise solutions, and when states do resolve their differences, the federal government aids in implementing their plans.

Hundley alters some traditional views of the compact. For example, Herbert Hoover's importance is recognized, but he is not credited with originating the two basin concept. Delph Carpenter, on the other hand, is given increased responsibility for the compact's final form, and an honest concern for Arizona's welfare apparently motivated George W. P. Hunt's antipathy for the compact.

In developing this study, Hundley has exhausted the available documentary evidence and his extended bibliography provides an excellent point of departure for future studies of water in the West. In addition, a skillful summarization of the origins of western water law, water-supply charts, and reference maps assist the reader in following the narrative.

While upper basin developments are not accorded the same treatment as those in the lower basin, the complexity of the lower basin conflicts accounts for this imbalance. One regrets, nevertheless, the cursory discussions of the 1948 Upper Colorado River Basin Compact and the Upper Colorado River Storage Project Act of 1956. These documents could well have been discussed at great length. Regardless, *Water and the West* takes its place as a fine example of the work possible in the area of western water rights.

University of Wyoming

GORDON O. HENDRICKSON

Wyoming Homestead Heritage. By Charles Floyd Spencer. (Hicksville, New York: Exposition Press, Inc., 1975). Illus. 199 pp. \$8.

For those who believe that the American frontier came to an end in 1890, Charles Floyd Spencer's *Wyoming Homestead Heritage* will provide some interesting surprises. When the author and his family arrived in 1910 to homestead near the Belle Fourche River in the northeastern corner of the state, Wyoming still had areas where few of the so-called conveniences of civilization could be found. Although the Superintendent of the Census had reported correctly the disappearance of the "frontier line" two decades earlier, the homesteading experiences recorded in this book furnish living testimony that in 1910 the conditions of pioneering in this part of the Great Plains had not significantly changed.

Spencer and his family had arrived from Michigan to homestead 320 acres of prairie soil located at the edge of timber and shale land. Like so many others moving into the Cowboy State at this time, they had accepted the federal government's challenge; they would prove that they "could live on the land for three years without starving-out." Their first months were characterized by almost constant work, but with five offspring ranging from ages

twelve (the author was the youngest) to twenty-two, there were plenty of willing hands to wage the contest. In the process of proving up their claim the Spencer family also helped to develop Wyoming; the two oldest boys worked in a mill in exchange for lumber needed to improve the homestead site and the two girls, the youngest only sixteen, passed the required examinations to become school teachers.

The strength of this rewarding little volume is its intimate and detailed information about what frontier life was like at this time. The plentifulness of game found almost everywhere will probably surprise some readers. The struggle of settlers to develop something as fundamental as a pure and reliable supply of drinking water will create in others an awareness that pioneering is much more romantic in retrospect. Yet the excitement of the Old West persisted in Wyoming well into the twentieth century. Spencer saw his last open-range cattle roundup in June, 1911. He almost got caught in the crossfire as a mounted posse trapped an armed fugitive in the cabin of a friend. The frightened man was forced to surrender after every window had been shattered by bullets, causing the small shack where he sought refuge to be "pretty well ventilated."

Perhaps the major weakness of Spencer's memoirs is his organization of material. He concentrates on two periods: from 1910 to his enlistment in the army during World War I and on the years immediately following his military service. But in his narrative he often jumps around with little regard to chronology, recalling episodes from his entire life. Of lesser importance is his tendency to moralize, particularly in the chapter "From Where I Stand," where he confidently presents his opinions on everything from women's liberation to unionism. His views on hunting regulations and wildlife management are especially pronounced; in one chapter he presents a ringing defense of the use of 1080, the controversial coyote poison. A final criticism might be his overuse of clichés, not really an important weakness in this type of book.

Spencer's memoirs, notwithstanding these few criticisms, are most valuable in giving the reader a glimpse of frontier Wyoming. *Wyoming Homestead Heritage* should, therefore, be a worthwhile addition to the state's historical literature.

University of Northern Colorado

ROBERT W. LARSON

Military Posts of Wyoming. By Robert A. Murray. (Fort Collins: The Old Army Press, 1974). Illus. 82 pp. \$10.

Military Posts of Wyoming is a well-illustrated guide to Wyoming's nineteenth century army camps and forts. Author Bob Murray provides a brief history of over twenty-five outposts, and gives one many a twentieth century glimpse at what remains.

This book is one of a series of "fort books" published by The Old Army Press. Since several volumes of a similar nature and format have preceded this one, it would be natural to assume that the latest should be the best. Unfortunately, in the opinion of this reviewer, it falls far short. *Military Posts* is loaded with inexcusable typographical errors; it has historical inaccuracies, a shameful map, lacks a bibliography, and all in all looks too much like a hurried production.

A good map would enhance any book of this type. The one on page nine is hardly an asset. Camps Pilot Butte and Stambaugh and Forts Phil Kearny and Fred Steele are either misnamed or misspelled. Granted, "Fort Warren" was part of a natural name progression, but considering the scope of this work, shouldn't it be Fort D. A. Russell? Fort Fetterman has been placed on the wrong side of the North Platte River! Fort Yellowstone and its earlier Camp Sheridan were not on the map or discussed in the text. Camp Hat Creek, South Pass Station, Bridger's Ferry and the military warehouses at Rock River were discussed in the text but did not appear on the map. And Fort MacKenzie was on the map, but was not covered in the text. A more serious attempt at just this one map would have made *Military Posts of Wyoming* a much more useful and valuable book.

A few other changes would also have enhanced this book immensely. For instance, there was no discussion on a number of outposts regarding the 1974 site. Comments of that nature are a real asset to a survey book such as this one. A bibliography, better yet an annotated one, would have been extremely useful, especially considering the tremendous volume of material available on Wyoming's forts. The photographic essay at the end has rather tenuous ties to the book. It adds nothing and may have served better had it been left out completely.

Bob Murray has written some outstanding history. The implication is not intended that *Military Posts* does not have select merits. For instance, it has interesting text illustrations, including three contemporary watercolors of Forts Reno and Phil Kearny that are previously unpublished. Still, with just a little more effort on the part of both the author and the publisher, this book could easily have been much better.

Fort Laramie National Historic Site

PAUL L. HEDREN

Agriculture in the Development of the Far West. Ed. by James H. Shideler. (Washington: The Agricultural History Society, 1975). Index. 316 pp. \$7.

This book is an excellent example of how the papers presented at a symposium should be preserved. A symposium on the place of Agriculture in the Development of the Far West was held at the University of California, Davis, in June, 1975, sponsored by the Agricultural History Society. This organization has undertaken the task of publishing the results of the symposium in this hardback volume. Thirty-eight topics, prepared by forty individuals, are included in this book.

Editor James H. Shideler has brought these topics together in a book which will give the reader a capsule view of a wide range of western agricultural subjects. From "‘A Different Mode of Life’ Irrigation and Society in Nineteenth Century Utah," by Leonard J. Arrington and Dean May, to Carlo M. Cipolla's, "European Connoisseurs and California Wines, 1875-1895," we find a mosaic of papers all focused on the theme of agriculture in the development of the Far West. As is often the case, these papers are not all written on the same level of scholarship. Some papers will interest a larger number of readers than other presentations. Perhaps the reader who would find the paper "The Okie as Farm Laborer," by Walter J. Stein a rewarding reading experience for the observations noted by Stein on the farm labor problem and agricultural migrants, would not be as interested in some of the papers aimed at another reader. The paper "Davis Campus Farm Machinery Collection," by John R. Goss, which notes the number of farm implements in this collection, is a case in point. However, this book is not designed solely for scholars and researchers. The scope of topics presented between its pages will appeal to a diverse agricultural readership.

The majority of the authors are associated with colleges or universities, but a significant number of the papers encompassed in the book were presented at Davis by practitioners in some area of agriculture. This blending of approaches gives the book an additional dimension. The papers prepared by scholars include presentations made by anthropologists, historians, engineers, attorneys, economists, geographers, foresters, and professors in many agricultural fields.

A panorama appears which gives the reader a picture which can be observed from many angles. If one theme seems to appear more than any other, it is that the self-reliant western agriculturist has adapted to meet the challenges of a strange new land. Another is the uneasy position of the western rancher or farmer, who on the one hand desires and believes he needs federal support to ensure his survival in business, but on the other hand he is suspicious of

and continues a dogged resistance to any hint of federal control or interference.

This attractive and durable volume is a bargain at its modest price. It deserves to be on the bookshelf of not only those who cherish the memory of far western agriculture of the past, but also those individuals who will examine the agricultural development of the region today and in the future.

Missouri Southern State College, Joplin ROBERT E. SMITH

Fort Bridger: Island in the Wilderness. By Fred R. Gowans and Eugene E. Campbell. (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, 1975). Index. Illus. 194 pp. \$7.95.

The fur trade rendezvous had ended in 1840 and the trade was entering the decline that presaged its end. Jim Bridger was looking for ways to earn a living.

He attempted to establish a fur trading post on the Green River, but failed. A second venture ensued with the building of a post on a tributary of the Yampa River. Disaster again fell in Bridger's fortune when his partner, Henry Fraeb, and four companions were killed by Indians and the post burned to the ground.

He and his then partner, Louis Vasquez, constructed buildings on the bluffs overlooking the valley of Black's Fork of the Green River. In less than a year, they moved down into the valley along the east bank of the stream. Here in the spring of 1843, in the lovely valley with the snow-clad Uinta Mountains looming high to the south, was erected the fort that was to bear his name and was to be the first trading post established specifically to serve the emigrant caravans going west. This book is the story of that fort.

The wide margins of each page and devoting of one and one-half pages to the headings of each chapter results in some wasted space.

Illustrations, generally of one-half page and occasionally of a full page are effectively used as aids to telling the fort's history, and add much to both the enjoyment and appearance of the book. One of the photographs of Brigham Young has not been published before.

Some of the handwritten source documents reproduced here are difficult to read. Doctors Gowans and Campbell have thoughtfully provided a printed transcription of these in the Appendix, as well as a chronological list of the commanding officers of the post, and a similar list of Indian agents, both of Fort Bridger and of the Wind River Reservation in Wyoming.

Under the heading, "notes," has been listed sources consulted by the authors. It is not made clear if this is a complete list of sources. If such is the case, it strengthens the reviewer's belief

that the history of the ten years (1847-1857) of the Saints' association with and ownership of the fort has been overemphasized.

There are thirteen maps included; two of these are of two pages each, the others of one page or one-half page each.

Twenty-two pages of the book's total of one hundred sixty-four pages of illustrations and text are used to tell the history of the brief two years of Church ownership of the fort; where only sixteen pages are employed to relate the thirty-one years of ownership by the Federal Government. These facts defeat the authors' claim that this is a detailed history of the early years of the fort, and leave the suspicion that the book's principal purpose was to establish the legality of both the forcible takeover of the fort by a large group of Mormons (150 men) and its purchase.

It is regrettable that the authors slighted the long period of army occupancy of Fort Bridger.

It is also unfortunate that in paying tribute to that long-time resident in that area, Uncle Jack Robinson, they took occasion to disparage Jim Bridger.

Eastern Wyoming College

WILLIAM SHAY

Alton Hutson: Reminiscences of a South Plains Youth. By W. C. Holden. (San Antonio: Trinity University Press, 1975). Index. Illus. 151 pp. \$12.

The title page of this volume lists W. C. Holden as the author, instead of editor, of Alton Hutson's *Reminiscences of a South Plains Youth*. Moreover, in the preface Holden notes that new material has been added to Hutson's scattered recollections and that Hutson's original manuscript, a collection of incidents arranged in a purely chronological fashion, has been reorganized to fit a topical as well as chronological sequence of events. This rather unusual procedure raises the obvious question of how much of this book is composed of Hutson's recollections and how much is Holden's work. There are virtually no footnotes and what part Hutson played in Holden's reorganization of his material, whether he approved of it, or of the added material, is nowhere stated. Rather strangely, too, the publishers devote approximately half a page to the delineation of Professor Holden's career but have no similar summary of Hutson's life anywhere.

Holden—apparently—has divided the book into nineteen sections, which could pass perhaps as chapters, and within these sections he has arranged the various stories that relate roughly to the section heading. Under the title "Hog Killing, Roys, and Claytons," for example, one learns something about street development in Lubbock, Texas, the railroad's arrival in that town, the incorporation of the town, herding cows on the outskirts of the

town, the ranches owned by R. M. Clayton, and Hutson's extended family, particularly his grandfather's role at hog killing time.

Most sections of the book contain similarly diverse material, but in spite of this, the book does tell the story of what it was like to grow up on the West Texas plains in a pioneer town in the early 1900s. Anyone interested in this will surely find the volume rewarding despite the fact that the modifications of Hutson's original recollections have not been made clear.

Hutson's memoirs will be particularly interesting, of course, to the people of Lubbock and the surrounding area. Hutson was born there, grew up there, and, except for brief interludes, spent most of his life there. Because his family was poor, Hutson began work at an early age, and the variety of jobs he held and business ventures he engaged in, gave him a familiarity with the town and its people that allows him, or possibly Holden, to write with authority about the area.

But anyone who is interested in rural America as it was some seventy years ago will find Hutson's recollections appealing. For he captures the excitement of the train's first arrival in Lubbock, the freedom of growing up with Commanche boys as playmates, and the tolerance that made possible eccentric characters like Uncle Tang and his grandfather who preferred the ground to a bed at night.

Finally, the book is a reminder of what it was possible to do, both good and bad, in that unregimented and uncrowded land at the turn of the century. Indeed, it is very possible that Hutson's schoolboy antics, which were generally regarded as pranks in 1900 and at which he winks in his memory, might well have made him a juvenile offender in an America swollen with an increasingly litigious people.

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The Wyoming State Archives and Historical Department has as its function the collection and preservation of the record of the people of Wyoming. It maintains the state's historical library and research center, the Wyoming State Museum and branch museums, the Wyoming State Art Gallery and the State archives.

The aid of the citizens of Wyoming is solicited in the carrying out of its function. The Department is anxious to secure and preserve records and materials now in private hands where they cannot be long preserved. Such records and materials include:

Biographical materials of pioneers: diaries, letters, account books, autobiographical accounts.

Business records of industries of the state: livestock, mining, agriculture, railroads, manufacturers, merchants, small business establishments and of professional men such as bankers, lawyers, physicians, dentists, ministers and educators.

Private records of individual citizens, such as correspondence, manuscript materials and scrapbooks.

Records of organizations active in the religious, educational, social, economic and political life of the state, including their publications such as yearbooks and reports.

Manuscript and printed articles on towns, counties and any significant topic dealing with the history of the state.

Early newspapers, maps, pictures, pamphlets, and books on western subjects.

Current publications by individuals or organizations throughout the state.

Museum materials with historical significance: early equipment, Indian artifacts, relics dealing with the activities of persons in Wyoming and with special events in the state's history.

Original art works of a western flavor including, but not limited to, etchings, paintings in all media, sculpture and other art forms.

